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THE ROYAL WAFFS

In the course of the diary which MICHAEL UNDERHILL kept of TUBBY's visit to West Africa (see p. 198 below) a number of references to the "Waffs" will be found. We are much indebted to the EDITOR of The Times for permission to reprint the following article which TUBBY contributed to its pages on April 18.

THE West African Frontier Force consists of one full brigade of native infantry, supported by one light battery of artillery, a light mortar battery, and a signal school. There is the tally of it. This standing army guards three disjoined colonies and two protectorates. It preserves peace between some 50 high-tempered tribes, and is the final instrument internally for the control of a population of nearly 40,000,000 beneath the British flag in West Africa.

They are worth knowing, as Toc H, with its new units in the Gold Coast and in Nigeria, has found out—this little pocket army, split into cheerful atoms, making a brave display between tribes tempted to be quarrelsome. In camp, or on the march, or on manœuvres, they are alert, contented, proud of discipline and of their own brass bands. The bandsmen roll their eyes over their regimental quick-step airs, behind their own drum-major. Their British officers, warrant officers, and N.C.O.'s have their copper-coloured companies well in hand, and understand their tongues and temperaments. The troops themselves have their own sergeant-majors, sergeants, and corporals, whose words—it takes a lot of Hausa words—are law, when once delivered.

Even a private in a West Coast regiment has one whom he can order at his will. Officially, his wife is in this category; for Moslem law has not been tempted as yet to drop "obey" out of the bond of marriage. But those who know murmur discreetly that few women have more control over their husbands than these good soldiers' helpmates. Outwardly without rights, they are not subservient. They are the traders and the diplomats. Their men are brave. You can't be brave and clever.

Beyond his better self, each private boasts a "barracky boy" or juvenile armour-bearer. These march behind their masters in a less perfect squad, clean their equipment, lay their kit out ready for inspection, inform them when a scrubbing-brush has "died," or when their splendour must have a new kammerbund. Most of these boys try to enlist later, not only out of loyalty. They long to have a "barracky boy" under their own command, and take it out of him; for they have known the process intimately.

One feature of army discipline in these West Coast battalions is unusual. The regimental Maigajiya would have held her own with Queen Elizabeth. She is chosen by all the wives of the regiment; the process of election is unknown. Some 500 African women manage somehow to agree that Private Hussein's wife—for privates are officially monogamous—or the senior wife of the sergeant's dual allowance, or even one of the three wives embellishing the regimental sergeant-major shall be appointed Maigajiya. This post, which carries pay and a red sash, combines all sorts of unexpected duties. She is the regimental Mrs. Grundy; she is a chaperon, a business woman, a vaccine enthusiast, a matrimonial agent, a she-dragon of Mohamedan propriety. For all this she receives 4s. a month.

Picture a small detachment of burnished warriors outside a low-roofed native hut, intent upon adjustments in their pay-sheet. Within, two British officers are wrestling at two tables with the laws of addition and subtraction. They will interview each man in turn, pay him his monthly wages from the King's most excellent Majesty, see he receives the same into his cap, and then require him to return the appropriate deductions as laid down in the ever-changing subtleties of recent Regulations.

"Moma Yola," murmurs the Company Commander, like a spent swimmer fainting. "We must get threepence back, Sir," says the subaltern, examining the pay-roll and appurtenances. "The simplest line of argument is 'widows,'" sighs the Captain. "There is small hope in informing Private Moma Yola that the monetary mess all round the world necessitates reduced allowances." "With the thermometer where it must be, if we had only got one, simplicity is truer than the truth," suggests the Lieutenant, jesuitically.

"Moma Yola!" thunders the native sergeant, his red sash flashing fire. Private Moma Yola enters, straightens out, salutes with tutored aptitude, and stands.

"Widows," murmurs the subaltern, prompting as from the wings. The Captain pays no heed to the irreverence, but takes up a smaller pillar of pierced coins, and counts them into a round hat, held hopefully in two enormous brown hands. The Captain then extracts three coins from the deposit; the fingers close upon the rest. His Majesty has settled with Moma Yola for one more month. The cap is now replaced and Moma Yola, the man-mountain, well content, salutes, bends down, departs. "Beware of vidders, Samivel," mutters the apt Lieutenant.

A NEW TALE OF TALBOT HOUSE

THE picture of a boy of ten sitting up in bed in his dormitory at school in the interval before "lights out," writing his own version of the story of Toc H, is a vision which should please those whose faith in Toc H lies in the younger generation. This new edition of *Tales of Talbot House* has been brought back from school, sharing the honour of inclusion in a "strictly private" notebook with a graphic chart showing "How Newcastle United won the Cup," the plan of a private wireless-set not yet marketed in any country, a modernist portrait which may be that of his headmaster, photographs of many leading footballers (little do

they appreciate the honour done to them !) and our historian's own choice of Blackheath's team for the "Seven-a-sides."

The spelling in the original suggests that the boy's mind was concerned only with "this club in Popperinge owned by an English Padre called Tubby Claton" and not with phonetics, which is an excellent start. His description of the Old House is a good effort for one whose parents were hardly known to each other when it was first opened, while the words "*more or less private*" would make an excellent notice for the Founder Padre's room to-day.

"On the first story you might see a soldier playing a banjow and another soldier singing to it, then there were packs of cards for the soldiers to play with. Then on the second floor was a place in which men whose mothers were very ill and they wanted to sit quiet and think about it could sit. There was also a very beautiful liberty which had books of all kinds for the soldiers to read. Then on the fourth floor was the pardres room which was always kept more or less private."

This is followed by a good explanation of the name Toc H and the Army signallers' alphabet ("the war office invented a code which made it very much easier to hear") and then this delightful reference to the Upper Room :

"On the outside of Talbot House just on the roof was a little window, and one day two Tommies climbed up outside and peard in and they saw a little attic. Then one of the Tommies had an idea and he climbed down and went to Tubby Claten and asked if the attic could be a prayer room and then after a short conversation it was decided that it should be as long as no more than twenty people went in there at a time. Then this tommy went out into the garden and on the rubbish heap he found an old carpenter's bench all chiped and cut and this was taken up to the attic for an alter, and to this day the alter still remains at Talbot House, and thousands of services have been held in the little Chaple and over sixty people have been in the room at a time."

How many of us, in telling the story of Toc H, have recaptured the spirit of adventure as well as this picture of the two Tommies, peering in through the semi-circular windows of the attic and seeing then their first vision of what it eventually became—an Upper Room?

Marks are referred to as "houses in London which take people in who have not got anywhere to live," while tribute is paid to his Uncle "who in his spare time dose quite a lot of carpentry and made the group at home a stand for their rushlight and at the back was the Toc H Cross."

The delightful story closes with a generous reference to his father's humble efforts to pay his rent for his room on earth and, better still, a "main resolution" which I feel sure your readers will heartily endorse.

"My father takes our little home cinema down to the poor boys clubs in London and shows them films and then plays draughts and chess with them; and he takes all my papers to the Taxi drivers and their children to read. I am only small but I am looking forward very much to when I grow up because I shall be a member of Toc H."

And so say all of us!

"JESSE."

WHAT IS WRONG WITH TOC H?

No man who 'thinks fairly' and clearly about Toc H will maintain that it has no faults—for that would make it unique among human institutions. Anyone who tries to see and point out its faults honestly and with a desire to remedy them, does our movement good service. This is the aim of a short series of thoughtful articles by a member in the North Western Area, of which we now publish the first.

I.—Toc H as an End in Itself

IN August, 1931, there appeared in the JOURNAL an article by Collin Smith with the title *Of Heretics*. The present writer was greatly stimulated by that article, and looked in the JOURNAL month by month for the response which would be made by other members. Enough time has now elapsed to show, either that there is nothing really wrong with Toc H, or that our heretics are of a silent race unknown to history. If the writer were the only heretic in Toc H he would not break silence himself; but he knows that there are others and he feels that our various heresies ought to come out into the open. Only in this way will an opportunity be afforded to the orthodox, to reply and demonstrate that Toc H is, literally, 'a bit of all right.' Even if a great deal is wrong, *What is Wrong with Toc H?* is of lesser importance than the other question, *What is Right with Toc H?* The writer has asked himself the more vital question, and answered it so far to the satisfaction of his conscience that he is still a keen member of Toc H.

No doubt, one of the reasons for the diffidence of the unorthodox is a sort of Front Line feeling, in which it is realised how little of the whole struggle can be seen by any one man of those who hold the advanced trenches. The writer has this feeling himself, and admits that what he will try to set down are mainly impressions of the few localities which are all that can be known really well by one man. These impressions will be as true as they can be made, by an earnest contemplation of the Third Point of the Toc H Compass—*To Witness Humbly*; but they may still not be typical.

Nevertheless, a deep experience of even one locality may be of value. Toc H goes so far beyond the surface of things, that he who is constantly travelling from place to place may see a broader picture and yet miss many of the realities behind it. The picture is not one of failure; where ideals are high enough, a disparity between aims and achievements is understandable. The danger is, rather, one of complacency; the danger of moderate standards believed to be high ones.

Criticism Met by Impatience

"Criticism is a hose, and a well-built house doesn't mind getting wet," wrote Collin Smith in his article. Whether justified or not, criticism certainly washes off the cobwebs of complacency. Yet Toc H displays an increasing impatience as a reaction to criticism. Be it noted that amused tolerance of criticism, without an attempt to answer it, is only another form of the same thing: patience with the critic is the passive side of one's impatience with his strictures.

We have been using the word *criticism* in its popular sense, implying adverse criticism. It would be well if we could capture more of the meaning of *criticism*

as used in a literary and artistic sense—an attempt to weigh a thing honestly, both its good and bad points; but adverse criticism would still be necessary, on occasion.

An aversion from adverse criticism of anything largely arises from its association, in our minds, with blame. A mental connection between a thing which is wrong, and the man who may be held responsible for it, leads us to bolster up our brother's mistake because he is our brother. At its widest, in the international sphere, there are men who still hold the ideal, *My Country, Right or Wrong*. But attempting to fasten blame on to some person, or some class, or some nation, wastes much of the time and energy which are needed for righting the wrong. And life is so complicated that it would be difficult, even if it were desirable, to apportion the blame for any particular evil. We should aim, too, to convince rather than convict people of error; and this is far more likely to be accomplished when the only blame unavoidably emerges from impartial enquiry. Habitual association of blame with criticism creates an atmosphere of hatred and mistrust in which neither reformer nor defender obtains a fair hearing and the evil tends to remain unremedied.

Scapegoats

As it affects us individually, the most insidious effect of this habit is the ease with which it enables us to find a scapegoat for every malady of the spirit. Properly received, only the most wild and unintelligent criticism is entirely lacking in value. It may be justified in a small degree only: to that extent we should not reject it. It may not apply to us as individuals; are we not, then, to consider our share of a corporate responsibility? And, as others may be unwilling or unable to shoulder their share, should we not do more than command success—deserve it, by taking up each the share of a lion, and not the share of a mouse?

When repeated criticism leaves us with no consciousness of disagreement, because it seems to be quite unconnected with our own habits and sentiments, we are Pharisees in the making.

Our scapegoat is not always taken from outside Toc H. It is not difficult to say: "Your criticism is true, but not in *our* Area"—or District, or Branch, or team, as the case may be.

Criticism which must be Answered

At one time, outside criticism of Toc H ran very much on the lines that it was too good to be true, that the ideal was altogether too high for ordinary men, that it could not last, and so on. It was often effectively answered by the simple invitation, "Come and see." To-day, with our smaller units, it is not always possible to adopt this method of converting the critic.

Furthermore, while it is not necessarily more true, outside criticism is now better informed and more definite in direction. When a critic, so far from deeming Toc H to be too good, gives reasons for his opinion that it is not good enough, his charges should be met and disproved, not just waved good-humouredly aside. He is evidently one of the idealists who should be in our ranks; and the duty of recruitment alone should lead us to cultivate his better acquaintance. Even when a defence is made, it is too often a flaunting of material gains rather than the producing of evidence of spiritual progress.

Toc H has no Monopoly

If Toc H broke down to-morrow, it would have accomplished much, in individual cases. To many of us, it has given contact with outside bodies of which our previous ideas were of the haziest, and in which we have, sometimes to our surprise, recognised the true spirit of Christ. The more of such experiences one has, the plainer is the realisation that Toc H methods are neither new nor unique. At its best, Toc H has a well-assimilated mixture of methods which is not easily equalled; but we do our cause harm when we lay extravagant claim to any particular method.

Pride of method, too, is vastly inferior to the deep-seated joy of spirit which is already our heritage. A well-run guest-night is a pleasure to all; but the finest guests will not seek membership because they are impressed with our efficiency —to parade it may even lead them to doubt the depth of the spirit behind it all.

Yet it cannot be right to be always describing the finest things and people as animated by the "*Toc H Spirit*." Toc H has no monopoly of the divine fire which we know by this name, and which should only be a convenient usage in intimate talk among members.

The Spirit of Probation

There are many other forms of uplifting experience, besides Toc H probation; and, like them, Toc H probation is a question of intensity rather than a matter of time. Different men need varying periods of probation. Where Toc H enforces the letter rather than the spirit of probation, there are two disastrous results. On being told, in effect, that they must come in and learn the alphabet of fellowship, men of courage and ability acquired in the world at large tend to go elsewhere, to fields where they can be of service at once. On the other hand, by insistence upon so-called Toc H methods in everything, it is too easy for a mediocrity to achieve eminence as an official in his branch, or even in his District.

At its best, Toc H is unrivalled at providing good fellowship and worth-while employment *as soon as a man comes into contact with it*. At a lower level, the writer fears that we are, while adopting a patronising attitude towards probationers, not asking enough from them—and, consequently, not asking enough from ourselves. The relative greatness of leaders may be gauged from the sacrifices which they demand (and obtain) from their followers. The supremacy of Our Lord is evident, in that He alone asks the utmost.

We have never asked very much of our probationers. At the present time, we ask more than ever, outwardly. Inwardly, are we not tending to set before our probationers (and consequently before ourselves) an alternative which Dean Inge has described as follows: "But men are always prone to slip out of the stern requirements of a creed which demands a consecration of words and thoughts as well as of actions. There is another religion ready to hand, which appeals to the natural man. This kind of religion makes only two demands upon us to practise the virtues of a combatant on the side of an institution, and to perform ritual observances." (By the way, the facility with which many of us fall into the popular view of the far-from-gloomy Dean, without reading a word of his writings, is itself a challenge to our fairmindedness).

Toc H is not an End in Itself

Whether or not Collin Smith's article caused a stir under the surface in Toc H, it was extensively quoted in the *Scouter* for October, 1931, evidently as having a vital message for the Rover Movement. The writer shares Collin Smith's "lurking fear that we are coming to regard Toc H as an end in itself, instead of as a glorious means to an end." Probation is often most real in Toc H units where the word is seldom heard, the most senior and eminent members realising that they, too, are on probation. One cannot do better than quote Collin Smith again: "Toc H is a university of character, and though for most men the course is never completed, yet some graduate, and we must set them joyously free to take up their responsibilities elsewhere, and devote all their energies to their own duty."

This was one of the quotations in the *Scouter*; and, if it applies to the Rover Movement, its application to Toc H must be even stronger.

Toc H is not an end in itself. It is part of the process of "the sacrifice of the good for the better, and the better for the best." Toc H has to cover (not merely touch) the whole world before it finally succeeds; but at the moment of success Toc H, as Toc H, will cease to exist.

F. W. M.

TOC H TRAVELLERS' TALES

With Owen and Geoff in Southern Africa

Since OWEN WATKINS (*Joint Administrative Padre*) and GEOFFREY MARTIN (*late Assistant London Secretary*) with Mrs. WATKINS, sailed for South Africa late in January on Toc H duty, little news of them has reached home. Here is OWEN's first encouraging dispatch to the JOURNAL:—

GEOFF AND I do not propose to give you a diary of our proceedings, but we understand that the Family at home do want to know something of what we are doing and to be assured that we are justifying our existence—paying our rent for the room we take in South Africa. We left London on January 26 in the early morning, so that many who intended to see us off had not wakened to the day before we were gone. I consider this as providential, for if the hour had been later Toc H would have held up all traffic in St. Pancras. Even at that chilly hour, soon after dawn, a band of roaring stiffs were running Geoff. up and down the platform on their shoulders, cheering lustily and pelting him with oranges, apples and bananas instead of confetti. I contrived to efface myself and avoid attention and when anxious passengers asked "What is it? Is it a honeymoon couple starting on their wedding trip?" I answered that it looked like it, though the bridegroom seemed young. I don't know if they thought Mrs. Watkins was the blushing bride. Later the general opinion was that Geoff. was our little son—which mistake pleased us more than it seemed to please Geoff. At Liverpool we were late and there the assembled hosts of Toc H had been frozen stiff waiting on the quay, but none the less gave us a hearty welcome and a great send-off and we were literally snowed under with letters and telegrams wishing us God-speed. We realised as never before how strong and real is the bond which makes Toc H one great family.

Of the voyage I need say little, except that we enjoyed every moment of it. Geoff. speedily got on terms with everybody, lived and talked Toc H with such effect that eventually the passengers demanded that I give them a talk explaining what this strange thing Toc H was. My audience represented every part of the Union and of the Rhodesias,

and we received invitations to visit their cities, towns or "dorps," stay with them as long as we liked and show them how to get the thing going in their midst. On the social side and in arranging sports and games, Geoff. was distinguished; at dances my wife and I took it in turns chaperoning him. My duties ranged from early Communion and Divine Service on Sundays, visiting the sick (for we had one or two serious cases), the sad duty of a burial at sea, to the flippant task during the sports of judging ladies' ankles in a beauty competition. I also competed in the men's class of this event but was disqualified on the ground of flat feet.

At Madeira we had a run ashore, did the usual sights, climbed the heights (I did this very comfortably in a hammock) and toboganned down over the cobbles in the manner for which Madeira is famous.

Cape Town was reached on February 13 and Geoff. and Mrs. Watkins had the thrill of their first view of Table Mountain in the distance looking like a fairy castle in the clouds. Gradually it materialised into the beautiful reality, one of the sights of the world, Table Bay and the mountain with the city at its base creeping up the lower slopes. It was not my first view, but I too was deeply moved, for I felt that after long years once again I was at home.

Toc H was in force to meet and welcome us and telegrams poured in from all over South Africa. The warmth of our welcome was unmistakable and at once we knew that if we failed in our mission it would not be from lack of goodwill on the part of the

Family out here. We were not permitted to go to stay at a hotel. Mrs. Watkins and myself were carried off to stay with H. G. Wood, the chairman of the Cape Peninsular District, the man who, with Ronnie Grant, drew up the new Constitution for Toc H Southern Africa. Geoff. was taken possession of by Mr. and Mrs. "Plum" Davis, of Wynberg; it was thought that he would be a nice play-fellow for their children, who are known in Toc H as "the prunes." Later, when our hostesses could bear us no longer, Geoff. betook himself to a Dutch family on whom he hopes to practise his Afrikaans. Mrs. Watkins and I have invaded the delightful home of Colonel and Mrs. Rose. He is the Area Chairman of Cape Province; was in at the very beginning of Toc H Southern Africa; entertained Uncle Harry and Mrs. Ellison when they made their famous foundation-laying tour in 1926; and is a storehouse of wisdom and knowledge, of which we all avail ourselves.



High Commissioner

Our first morning was spent with His Excellency Sir Herbert Stanley, the British High Commissioner, who is the Hon. Commissioner of Toc H Southern Africa. It would be difficult to exaggerate all that his keenness, interest and solid work has meant to Toc H in this country. How he has found the time is a mystery—another striking example of the truth that if you want a thing done and done well, you usually find that it is the busy man who does it. In the evening the Family on the Cape Peninsular welcomed us. The meeting was held in the room of the *Central* Branch—a typical Toc H room, situated above a garage, reached by ladder-like stairs, decorated by warning notices that unless you kept your heads down you might dash out your brains against the beams. It was a great gathering of both Toc H and L.W.H. Sir Herbert Stanley welcomed us on behalf of Toc H Southern Africa. Everybody else welcomed us on behalf of District,

Branches and Groups—a chorus of welcome that almost overwhelmed. Looking down from the wall was a large crayon drawing of Ronnie Grant, who seemed to be grinning at our discomfort. Geoff. responded with such bashful grace, and lit up his remarks with such characteristic humour that it was an easy task for me to follow him. It was a good evening and everybody felt that an excellent beginning had been made. Geoff. and I, however, felt deeply that we could never hope to live up to all that seemed to be expected of us. Everywhere we cross the trails of the great ones who have been this way before: Uncle Harry, Gilbert Williams and Ronnie Grant. Even a five-minute visit from Pat is regarded as a treasured memory, and some reflected glory is ours, for we have lived on familiar terms with these men and are considered qualified to interpret their minds to those who do not know them as well as we do, and who therefore put a very high value on their opinions.

The days that follow are one wild welter of meetings, interviews and committees. Two days we sat in Conference with the representatives of the various areas of Southern Africa who had come together to implement the new Constitution, and to decide on the best use to which Geoff. and I might be put. It was a thrilling thing to visualize the distances these men had come and the days of travel involved, and to us a most useful thing thus to meet leaders drawn from all over Southern Africa. They made us feel how warm was the welcome that awaited us wherever we might go. In the interludes between addressing companies of parsons and a theological college and visiting every unit, there has been some relaxation, which included the Governor-General's garden-party and a Sunday spent partly with Sir Herbert and Lady Stanley at Milnerton and with the Archbishop of Capetown at Bishops' Court, which Uncle Harry has described as the most lovely house and garden in the world. Here we met Neville Talbot *en route* for England. We were saddened to think that when we visit Pretoria he will be no longer its Bishop. Everybody is anxious to help us; the Governor-General, Lord Clarendon, invited the three of us to luncheon and showed the keenest interest in our work. As President of Toc H Southern Africa he is no mere figurehead but keeps himself informed of all that happens in the Family and is eager and anxious to serve. The leaders of the various churches have also shown themselves equally friendly; the Archbishop and his clergy, Dutch Reformed, Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational ministers, all have gone out of their way to offer help, and are eager to share in the building of Toc H. The leading church newspapers of the Dutch Reformed and Methodist Churches have asked for articles explaining the meaning and purpose of Toc H. These have now been written and will be published in both Afrikaans and English within the next few days.

The visiting of the Branches and Groups has been a real joy and already we feel as if the members were old friends. Our bravest act has been to visit and address the two L.W.H. units. That is to say, I have; Geoff. could only screw up his courage to face one of them, though he is really the man that they clamour to see and hear. At this point, I think I ought to break the news to Geoff.'s many friends at home—he is in love with Josephine. The lady in question is of uncertain age, decrepit in appearance, none too clean, has the rats, but in spite of all is adored by many bright lads. Lest you be too greatly concerned



H. E.

let me hasten to say that Josephine is the name of a derelict mill, a corner of which the *Claremont* Group has been permitted to occupy as its headquarters. It is an ideal Toc H meeting place; you approach the room by a perilous footway of planks insecurely guarded by a rough rail. The room is lighted with hurricane lamps; the wind blows weirdly through empty lofts and bare rafters, and the only inhabitants when Toc H is not meeting are the rats. There are those who see in this substantial though neglected building a future Headquarters for Toc H Southern Africa. Who knows? Wilder dreams have come true. Meanwhile, Geoff. is in love with Josephine and the susceptible heart of Owen is not unmoved. Each Branch and Group we have visited has its very distinctive characteristic. For instance, the sound of Atlantic rollers breaking on the shore will always in the future bring back to me the memory of my visit to the *Sea Point* Group. The roar of a motor-car engine racing will remind me of the loft over a garage where "*Central*" meets; whenever I "see rats" I shall think of Josephine, whilst the sight of a tramp on the road will recall the *False Bay* Group. This Group, perhaps the *most* remarkable in existence, is the Wandering Jew of Toc H; it has no abiding place, "it never continueth long in one stay." Ever it passes from unit to unit, cheering and inspiring them. It implodes everywhere. Visit a unit at the other end of the Peninsula, and the *False Bay* Group and its Rushlight will be there. It has served a good purpose during a difficult time, but we all hope that in the near future it will take root once more and that its light will again lighten the darkness of the district from which it takes its name.

One most interesting evening was spent when Geoff. and I visited the *Durbanville* Group. This is a countryman's Group, and rather more than half the membership is Dutch. Geoff. was put in the chair and asked to show them how a Branch meeting was run in England. They all proved that they had the true Toc H spirit, for even Geoff.'s Afrikaans failed to draw reprisals. They had a topping room constructed and decorated by themselves. The furniture consisted of a rough table and a few chairs, but most of the seats were soap-boxes. Geoff. soon got them merry and bright by suggesting some songs in Dutch. A ukelele was fetched, and, first shyly and then with vim, they roared the songs of the old Vortrekkers so dear to the hearts of the South African Dutch. As we drove back the twenty miles or more by car to Capetown we felt that here we had seen the beginnings of what might some day be one of the greatest contributions that Toc H had to make to the life and well-being of South Africa.

Geoff. is now busy preparing for a training week-end to which only children of his own age will be invited. I am just off to Natal and shall not see the lad again for some months. I do not fear for him, however, for did he not for many moons sit at the feet of Uncle Harry and was he not trained by Alec in London? He is well able to stand on his own feet. He shall speak and write for himself at no distant date. O. S. W.

The 'lightning sketches' of LORD CLARENCE ('H.E.'—His Excellency the Governor-General), President of Toc H Southern Africa, and of SIR HERBERT STANLEY (High Commissioner), Vice-President of Toc H Southern Africa, were made by Mr. Konya at the Toc H Ball in Cape Town in May, 1931.

With Tubby in West Africa.—II

AS members already know, Tubby sailed, with Michael Underhill as his 'A.D.C.' from England on December 29, 1932, and reached home again on March 18th, 1933. After touching for a few hours at Freetown, Sierra Leone, they landed at Takoradi on the Gold Coast on January 12: they then visited Sekondi and Kumasi and arrived at Accra. Up to this point our readers were carried by an instalment of the lively diary kept

by Michael Underhill, which was printed in the March JOURNAL. The remainder of Michael's diary is now available, as well as some notes on the tour, drawn up at home, and we propose to summarize them briefly rather than to print them in detail.

At *Accra* the travellers found a flourishing Group of Toc H, which is greatly respected locally. It is doing wise and useful work by bringing British, French and German residents together regularly. We hope before long to hear of them applying for Branch status. The few days spent at Accra were busy and fruitful. On Friday, January 27, there was a public meeting for Toc H in the Defence Force Hall, attended by about 200, at which Tubby spoke and showed—as he did everywhere—the 'film slides' of the Old House, All Hallows, and so on, with his portable lantern. A striking little instance of the world-wide responsibilities of Toc H was provided by the presence of a member who had just come from Mauritius (one of the youngest overseas units) to relieve the chairman of Toc H, Accra, who was just being moved to Palestine. On the following day, Tubby and Michael drove out, five miles from the town, to *Achimota College*, which is part of the remarkable educational policy on Christian lines inaugurated by the British Government some years ago on the Gold Coast. The College is built and run on the lines of an English public school for Africans; it has wonderful buildings and grounds, in which our travellers watched—like a bit of England—a house cricket match and themselves played tennis. They stayed the night there with two Toc H members on the staff of the College. Sunday began with Holy Communion at 7 a.m. Our travellers then drove to the local leper settlement at *Abadi*, which they found particularly depressing. Johnston, of the Scottish Mission, who had driven them over, conducted a short service, with the aid of an interpreter, in a shed and this was clearly much appreciated by the African patients. Leprosy is one of the gravest West African problems, a disease so prevalent that the Government at present cannot afford to make it certifiable: patients therefore only come to the settlement by choice and can leave when they like. Toc H Accra is taking up leper-visiting at Abadi as one of its most urgent jobs. On Monday evening they held a splendid Guest-night in the Toc H bungalow, and on Tuesday they left Accra at midday by the German steamer *Wahehe* for *Lagos*. A big crowd of their newly-made friends from the Group came to see them off and to laugh as Tubby and Michael sat in chairs on the beach, and were then rushed through the surf by African porters and deposited in a small rowing-boat, out of which they were hauled, still seated in their chairs, by cranes to the steamer's deck.

Thus ended their visit to the Gold Coast, made very strenuous by the exacting climate, but resulting in the formation of Groups, or perhaps 'Wings,' at *Takoradi* and *Sekondi*, and an active 'groupe' at *Kumasi*, and much encouragement to the excellent Group at *Accra*. Officials of Government and the big trading concerns have given fine help. The Governor of the Gold Coast, H.E. Sir Shenton Thomas, with whom the travellers stayed at Christianborg Castle, has accepted Tubby's invitation to become President of Toc H in the Colony: he writes "To be the first President of Toc H in the Gold Coast is an honour; I shall try not to fail." The Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast, the Hon. G. A. Stafford Northcote, is very keen and has consented to be a Vice-President of Toc H, the Gold Coast.

And now—Nigeria

On Wednesday, February 1, their ship drew into *Lagos* harbour, running close along shore for a mile or so in deep water, which saves those landing the discomfort of the surf-boats at some other ports. Their first host was an official of the United Africa Company, in a lovely bungalow on the edge of the lagoon. The first two days they spent in seeing sights—and people, and in collecting an audience for a meeting which was held in a garden

on Friday. Tubby, of course, addressed it, while Michael, standing at the back of the lantern screen, unseen by the audience, showed pictures through it. After the meeting they went to Government House, where they were entertained for the ~~rest~~ of their stay in Lagos. On Sunday evening Tubby preached in the Colonial Church to a very big congregation, and the next afternoon they had tea with the Bishop before going to see the Seamen's Institute which will probably provide Toc H Lagos with its main field of service. At a meeting that night, at which about fifty men were present, they discussed putting new life into the *Lagos* Group, and Tubby outlined a possible plan of action. A good deal of the next day (Tuesday) was spent in looking up individual members, including the Dutch agent of the Holland West African Line who had done fine service for Toc H in Accra.

On Wednesday, February 8, the two travellers left Lagos in the afternoon for *Abeokuta*, which they reached after a motor-drive along narrow roads at alarming speed. After dinner the whole European community, about eighteen strong, turned out to hear Tubby speak, with his lantern, at the Club. *Abeokuta* means "the houses under the rocks," and next morning they went to see the rocks, with a deep cleft in them which until recently was the scene of human sacrifice: this eerie place struck Michael as the most remarkable sight in their whole tour. Before leaving they paid a call on Silaki, the king of the local chiefs, and found that he had arranged a ceremonial tea-party for them, with eight important chiefs drawn up as a bodyguard. Tea was served in front of an open-air throne, on a table decorated with a photograph of the Prince of Wales, and afterwards Tubby and his host, each under a state umbrella carried by a boy, walked round the grounds. Taking leave, they had a long drive to *Ibadan*, where they arrived too late for a meal before the meeting. Near *Ilorin* they also spent a night, in camp with the 'Waffs,' *i.e.*, the Royal West African Frontier Force, in grass huts, most cleverly furnished with tables and shelves made of mud by the troops. They dined well by brilliant moonlight. On Sunday Tubby took two services and showed his pictures, before they returned to Ilorin.

Monday morning, February 13, found them boarding the train for a two days' run up to *Kano*, which they reached at 6 a.m. on Wednesday. Here they found the picturesque Africa of the story-books, a native city with a thirteen-mile wall round it, the gateway of a desert road upon which caravans of camels, strings of donkeys, herds of cattle, splendid horsemen passed to and fro all day long. Next day, after a morning's close work on their mail, they visited another leper colony and were again much depressed by the conditions. In the evening a large audience assembled to hear Tubby and see his pictures: the talk was prefaced—as at other places—by the gramophone record of the Prince of Wales' Albert Hall appeal for social service which they had taken with them. Again they spent time with the 'Waffs.' On Sunday they went down by lorry to *Zaria*, 120 miles away, where they spent a very full 17 hours: once more a leper-colony (quite the best they saw), a visit to the 'Waffs,' a meal with the Resident, and a meeting at the end which lasted till midnight. Another week of travel and new friendships had gone by.

On Monday, February 20, they were in the train ascending enormous gradients on the way to *Jos*. On arrival they were entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Chitty in their lovely house and garden, dined with the Resident, and next day were taken to see how a tin-mine is worked in those parts. In the evening they met some 25 men, mostly tin-miners and mostly ex-service, to whom they showed their pictures and talked Toc H. On Wednesday there was another tin-mine to be visited and, in the evening, a big meeting in the European Club to which some people came 30 miles to listen to Tubby. And on Friday early they started down towards the hot plains again, in a car as far as *Jagindi*, where they took the train for a night journey to *Enugu*. Captain Shepheard, formerly a member at Lagos,

was their host there. The afternoon was spent at the C.M.S. College at *Awka*, where, after seeing a team of African boys beat a European team at football, they supped and held a meeting on Toc H.

Sunday, February 26, was a full day—Communion in the little European chapel, services in two native churches, and in the evening a shortened service in the European church where Tubby showed his pictures of All Hallows, followed by dinner with the Lieutenant-Governor. Next morning they said good-bye to Shepheard, their excellent host, and set out with Bishop Lasbrey, whom they had heard preach twice the day before. They called again at Awka College, and visited another C.M.S. school ten miles further on; their next stop was at a hospital run by six English women and financed by C.M.S., and then lunch in *Onitsha* at Bishop Lasbrey's house. In the evening, after a 200-mile drive in heavy heat over African roads, they reached *Aba* and found twenty people already assembled to hear Tubby speak, which he did to great purpose.

On Tuesday, February 28, they were on their way to *Oron*, whence a ferry was to take them twenty miles down the Niger River to *Calabar*. On the way they met half a battalion of their old friends the 'Waffs' and watched the officers paying the men—an incident amusingly described by Tubby in *The Times* of April 18 (reprinted above, p. 189). At Oron they were most happily introduced to an official of the United Africa Company who transferred our travellers and their luggage from the ferry to his own launch and, after an interesting voyage down the great river, here nearly a mile wide, took them to his bungalow at *Calabar*. An audience of about thirty, partly collected by their host and partly from the 'Waff' mess, listened to Tubby's thumb-nail sketch of Toc H that night. Next morning they sailed again, towards *Lagos* once more.

It was March 2 when they set foot in *Lagos* for the second time: they had landed there originally on February 1, just a month before. In their absence much had happened for which Toc H has cause to be grateful—before all to Col. R. H. Rowe, Commissioner of Lands, who has taken the leading part in the revival of the local Group as planned by Tubby with the members. Col. Rowe will act as senior adviser of Toc H in Lagos and as Vice-President of Toc H Nigeria. Tubby now found that the Governor had given Toc H the use of one of the Government Rest Houses—a fine place in which about four men could live comfortably in a 'chummery' and still leave room for a chapel, a library and a big room for meetings. And when the members turned up that night for a meeting in Col. Rowe's garden it seemed indeed that Toc H in Lagos was finding itself and held the promise of long life in a country where conditions are difficult and enthusiasms often short-lived. Tubby initiated six new members at this meeting, which was an excellent mixture of grave and gay, ending with family prayers about midnight. Friday was busily spent in looking up the friends our travellers had made on their first visit. They lunched with the Administrator and dined at Government House. And the next day, Saturday, March 4, they sailed from Lagos, their faces towards home. On Sunday morning their ship, the *Apapa*, anchored off *Accra*, and Drury, the new chairman of the Group, came aboard to take them ashore for a service in the Toc H bungalow, where there was a fine turn-out. At *Takoradi* a member also came aboard to report that the new unit there was already well started; several more members came and had tea on the ship. And so farewell to the West Coast where they had spent two months of restless travel—not, let us be sure, in vain.

It would be presumptuous to sum up the task of Toc H in West Africa: its future rests in the hands of those who know the country well and live in it. In the scattered places where small communities of our own countrymen and other Europeans are fully employed all day in business, where there are but two hours of daylight left at the end of the day

for recreation, where the climate sucks away a man's energy and temper continually, where—as so commonly among European communities 'exiled' in other lands—etiquette counts for much and class distinctions loom larger than at home, it might seem that little prospect is given to Toc H. Yet the Group at Accra provides a touchstone already and its steady fellowship of about thirty men meeting week by week should dispel all doubts about the thing being possible or enjoyable or useful. The prime task of fellowship is greatly needed and must be extended continually as new men, strange to the country and untried in its ways, come out from home. The fellowship thus founded must, as ever in Toc H, look outwards to the service of others. And there are many tasks waiting—to name one of which Tubby has had much to say since his return, the relief of the pressing and terrible evil of leprosy.

A BAG OF BOOKS

Religion for To-day

A Religion of Your Own. C. H. S. Matthews. Published by S.C.M., 2s. 6d.

Things New and Old. W. R. Inge. Longmans, 3s. 6d. (stiff covers); 2s. 6d. (paper covers).

These two excellent books can be mentioned together. They have a mutual interdependence. They are both concerned with personal religion. Mr. Matthews is a school chaplain and is writing primarily for those of school age who are beginning to search for a personal faith of their own. The Dean's book was originally given early this year in the form of addresses to the undergraduates at Cambridge and meets the demands of a later stage of development.

They are admirably suited, however, for the widest needs of age and experience, and form an excellent sequence for anyone who is being challenged by the Christian position.

The whole of Mr. Matthews' book is so good that it is difficult to emphasise particular features. It reads attractively and combines simplicity of exposition with loyalty to truth. The author breaks away from the shackles of those "theological" words which are so frequent in books of this kind that they now awaken no response on the reader's mind. The short chapter on "How your mind works" is illuminating and is typical of the freshness and sympathy of the whole book and I can only add that it is just the book which many of us for a long time have wished we could hand to the young probationer or member who realises how much he needs Christianity but is irritated and disturbed by many presentations of the Christian faith which he has come across.

The Dean of St. Paul's paid Cambridge undergraduates a great compliment when he delivered addresses of so profound and searching a nature. They represent the convictions of a life experience and in them are blended the mellowed wisdom and the penetrating spiritual insight of the greatest religious thinker and philosopher of our time. Over the long period of his life, Dr. Inge has given us many writings for which we are abundantly grateful. I doubt whether any will touch more sympathetically the spiritual aspirations of Everyman than "Things New and Old"—it is a book which will quicken into new hope and new courage the bewildered and chastened spirits of many of us. Gently he guides us out of his own experience through many practical difficulties, offering us a positive religion of the Spirit. The vision of life and of faith which he gives is wide in its embrace of history and of Christian witness.

It is impossible to select or discriminate in a book so uniformly rich in its wisdom and helpfulness. The Dean presents Christianity as a progressive religion of the spirit. He sets it in true perspective to the background of the Ancient World. His interpretation of the emphasis of the Gospels makes them startlingly living realities. In conclusion, he blends

together the challenge of the spirit for the individual and organised society, touching upon every stage in our human pilgrimage and pointing forward the redeemed and transformed individual to his eternal vocation here and hereafter.

These two books provide a strong sequence for any sincere inquirer who is eager to make lasting discoveries in the treasure house of Christian truth.

* * * *

It is worth while also to call attention to the issue of three of Dean Inge's older books in a new and attractive edition—Messrs. Longman's *Swan Library*, the volumes of which cost 3s. 6d. each. The well-known *Outspoken Essays* make up two volumes. The First Series, first published in 1919, has run through no less than fourteen impressions; the Second Series, first published in 1922, has had eight. The third book is *The Church in the World*, first published in 1927. The essays in these volumes deal with a great variety of subjects, religious, historical, social, often treated in a most challenging way which forces the reader to take sides strongly for or against the author.

The Toc H Padre.

The Toc H Padre. By H. F. S. Toc H Headquarters. Linen, 6d.

Here is Sawbones' little handbook for Padres in Toc H, which has been long needed. It replaces a smaller and much less adequate pamphlet, now out of print, and a larger booklet, which was mainly applicable to Area Padres (of whom there are few) but gave little guidance to Branch and Group Padres (of whom there are many hundreds). The new pamphlet, which is bound attractively in blue linen, is in three sections—first, "The Challenge of Toc H" to the clergy and ministers who may need convincing that it is well worth their while to devote time and thought to it; secondly, "Some Practical Points"—just the details a Padre ought to know about administration, the taking of family prayers, the ceremony of "Light," the use of Toc H chapels, Branch and Group services, the League of the Lamp; thirdly, "Toc H and the Church," the relation of our movement to organised religion, our standpoint on inter-communion, etc. An appendix contains the wording of the membership form, the Main Resolution, and a list of Toc H literature for further reading. Padres of Toc H convinced or hesitating about their job, will find every word of this valuable, and it should be put into the hands of any Padre who comes in touch with a Branch or Group. Lastly, the lay member need not think that it is no concern of his; he will learn much from it of practical value.

Hospital Prayers.

A Hospital Prayer Book. Compiled by Rev. V. L. Johnstone. Oxford Univ. Press, 1s.

The connection of this excellent little book with Toc H is immediately clear to any member who opens it or who knows Padre Verney Johnstone of Oxford. Many of the prayers familiar to us through our own *Treasury* are to be found in it, including the Toc H Prayer itself—with the note "Toc H helps the Hospitals; let us help Toc H by saying their prayer and echoing its spirit in our lives." All units which count hospital-visiting among their jobs should have this little book in their armoury.

A New "Bangwent"

The eighth of Tubby's varied and attractive *Bangwent* (Saxpence) series is just out. It is called *As of a Lamp* and consists of a series of very brief sketches of a score of Saints, old and more recent, by Fr. Gerard Sampson of Mirfield. The proofs accompanied Tubby on his West African journey, and the Bishop on the Niger contributes a foreword.

THE POOL OF PEACE

PILGRIMAGE parties visiting the Old House at Poperinghe are accustomed to include Lone Tree Crater, "the Pool of Peace," in their itinerary of the Ypres Salient. It is possible that many visitors to it have uncertain ideas as to its origin and significance and the course of events which has placed it in our keeping. As the protracted negotiations over it are now complete, we will set out the whole story.

The Battle of Messines, June 7-15, 1917

The event which produced this great hole in the ground is thus briefly described in *The Old House*, the handbook for Poperinghe pilgrims published as a supplement to this JOURNAL in December, 1930:

After the Second Battle of Ypres in June, 1915, "for two weary years the opposing armies, besieged and besiegers, settled down to trench warfare in the Flanders mud. The Germans had the advantage all this time of the rising ground east and south of Ypres from which they overlooked the movements of our patient and tormented men in the sodden plain. To relieve this situation, grown intolerable, it was necessary first to gain possession of the ridge on which the villages of Messines and Wytschaete stand. By the Summer of '17 the high ground farther south—the Somme uplands and Vimy Ridge—was secure, and the Battle of Messines could be undertaken. It had been long and carefully prepared. For years our tunnellers had been at work and 470 tons of explosive lay under the ridge ready for the fateful touch. A belt of guns of all calibres, four thousand yards in depth, had been wonderfully hidden between Ypres and Armentieres. Eight days of artillery preparation preceded the assault and in this time nearly 100,000 tons of ammunition and 70 tons of gas were poured into the enemy positions. The opening of the battle proper was one of the most dramatic moments of the War. Just after 3 a.m. on June 7, the simultaneous explosion of nineteen mines shook the surrounding country. The Prime Minister, secretly advised, listened for the sound of it in England. Huge black pillars of earth and thick smoke, carrying with them many fragments of what a moment earlier had been unsuspecting living men, rose into the summer dawn, and at the same instant all the guns of the Second Army opened out in a semi-circle of flame and unimaginable sound. Behind the barrage the infantry advanced steadily forward. There was fierce fighting at some points, but twelve hours later success was almost complete. By June 15 a position of immense strength and value, 10 miles wide and over two miles deep, was entirely in our hands. Men may be pardoned at such a time for seeing victory in sight. They could not see how intense an agony was now to begin. For efforts to which 'the nation had given three years of toil and suffering and half a century's savings' were not yet to achieve final success." A month later the Third Battle of Ypres, chiefly memorable for the bitter struggle for the Passchendaele Ridge, opened and was fought unabated for eleven weeks.

The Battle of Messines succeeded in every detail "according to plan," and has been claimed as the most complete military operation of the War. It was the greatest personal achievement of the Second Army Commander, who took his title from it as "Lord Plumer of Messines." He conceived the plan of it with great



LONE TREE CRATER, SPANBROEKMOLEN, THE ACTUAL "POOL OF PEACE."



ST. ELOI CRATER, THE ORIGINAL PROJECT FOR A "POOL OF PEACE."

Both photographs were taken by a Times staff photographer and appeared in that paper on Armistice Day and September 19, 1929, respectively. The upper panorama shows Kemmel Hill, with its post-war tower, in the distance and the low hill of Scherpenberg on the right of it. The lower picture is a view which will never be seen again: the crater is filled in and buildings stand upon it. Both pictures are reproduced by courtesy of the Editor of The Times.

PLATE XX.

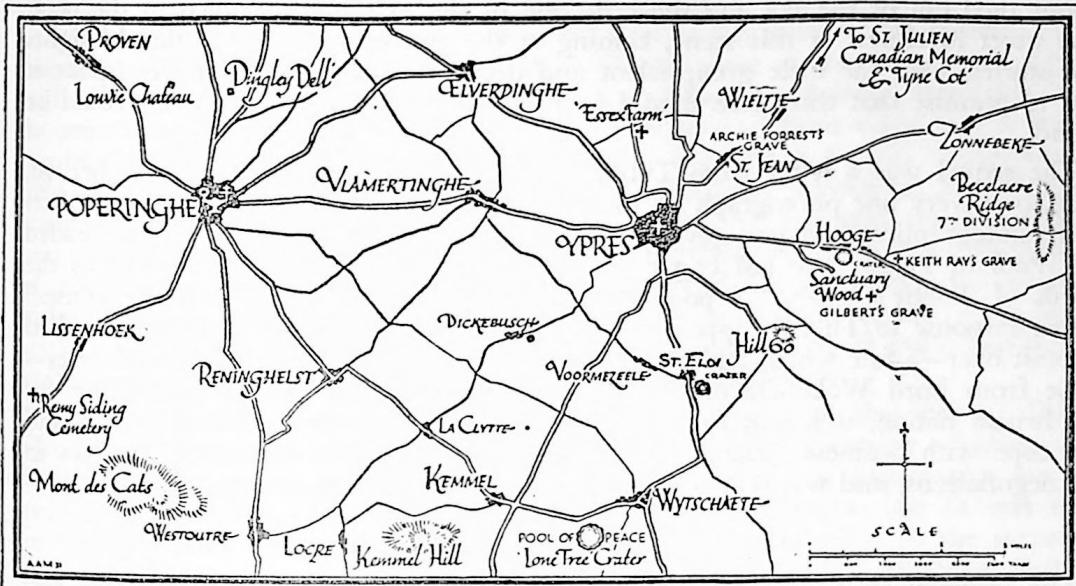
THE POOL OF PEACE TO-DAY.



"A gathered radiance, a width, a shining peace."



"Beside the still waters."



boldness, had every detail of its preparation worked out with the minutest care, and sustained the whole operation, which took nearly two years' work from first to last, with unfailing faith and courage. At the moment when the great explosion took place he was not among the sightseers, but on his knees at his headquarters, remembering the men who must face death that day.

Evening at St. Eloi

A handful of Toc H members, probably not more than half-a-dozen, were present at the birth of the idea which has produced the "Pool of Peace." It was during a big Toc H pilgrimage to the Salient and the Somme battlefields in 1929. On Sunday, September 1, the party had spent most of the afternoon on Kemmel Hill surveying the great expanse of the Flanders plain, with the Messines Ridge just below them across the flat valley. When they came down at tea-time, Tubby took the notion to walk back to Ypres by a circuitous route, while the main body returned by the steam-tram. He called for company, promising them rough-going, perhaps a long march and a late return, and a dozen or so volunteered. Eventually they found themselves approaching the forking roads at St. Eloi, and turned aside to look at the mine-crater there, one of the series of nineteen from the Messines battle. Unlike the craters in the porous chalk of the Somme (e.g., the huge chasm at La Boisselle), which remain as bare, dry quarries, they found this pit in the Flanders clay full to the brim with water, fringed with reeds and rushes. After a few minutes, half the party pushed on towards Ypres; the rest could not tear themselves away from a scene which grew every moment more beautiful. The afternoon was ended and the sun had begun to set in a glory of golden clouds over the plain and the low 'Mounts of Flanders.' Sitting on the eastern rim of this still pool—far smaller in extent than the Lone Tree Crater—they watched the fiery ripples on the water surface, set in a frame of green bulrushes, until the

colour died out of the sky and the reflection of the first star trembled in the pool. The quiet loveliness of this scene, coming at the end of a day of battlefield sights and stories, held the little group silent and deeply moved. When Tubby spoke it was to promise that this place should be permanently preserved, if means could be found.

The sequel was a letter from Tubby to *The Times*, followed on September 19, 1929, by a very fine photograph on the picture page of that paper, which one of its staff photographers had gone over specially to take. The picture-page was headed "A Pool of Peace: the last crater at St. Eloi," and it referred its readers to the words of Tubby's letter, "a pool of peace, where man's wrath is God's praise." Quick response to Tubby's appeal to save the crater from being filled in and tilled or built over—a fate which had already overtaken a number of others in the series—came from Lord Wakefield of Hythe. He offered to buy the St. Eloi crater for the British nation, if it was for sale. Paul Slessor, who speaks fluent French and can cope with business situations in a variety of languages, offered his services in the negotiations, and was sent over to Belgium to make further enquiries.

The Purchase of Lone Tree Crater

The Imperial War Graves Commission lent a friendly hand from the start and has never failed with advice and help; no one is so well qualified as its officers to deal with the complications of land tenure on Continental soil. They advised at once against the St. Eloi crater, which lies on the edge of a village at the junction of two country roads and was obviously destined to be filled in and built upon: this has since taken place. Careful search revealed the advantages of the crater at Spanbroekmolen, near the small group of buildings which our men in the War had christened Lone Tree Farm (there is no conspicuous 'lone tree' now remaining) and the small British cemetery of that name. This was not only larger and more secluded than the St. Eloi crater, but its high 'lip,' the rampant of clay thrown up round the cavity of the explosion, commanded a very fine view extending from Kemmel Hill on the one hand to the spires of Ypres itself on the other.

Some official details about this crater may be of interest. The sap which was patiently dug by the tunnellers to undermine this spot was begun on January 1, 1916, and completed on June 26, 1916: the length of the gallery was 1,710 feet. A charge of 91,000 lbs. of ammonal was laid, at a depth of 88 feet below the surface of the ground. When the charge was blown on June 7, 1917, the hole made was 40 feet deep and 250 feet wide at ground level: the rim of debris thrown up was 13 feet high and 90 feet wide. The diameter of the 'total obliteration' of the land at this point was 430 feet. Anyone who reflects on these measurements can begin to imagine the frightful forces put into instantaneous play by the touching of a button.

Negotiations for its purchase proved to be long and difficult. Over a dozen Belgian landowners were in some way concerned with this small patch of waste ground and had to be brought, more or less willingly, to agree to its sale to a foreigner. Eventually it could be reported to Lord Wakefield that his generous gift was in sight of realisation.

The Gift of the Old House

At this point there was a totally unexpected turn in the story which deserves to be known by all our members. When Paul Slessor went to report good progress with the crater, Lord Wakefield expressed his pleasure at having been able "to do something for Toc H." Paul replied that what had been done had a wider significance—it was a gift, not to Toc H, but to the British people. Lord Wakefield then suggested that there might be some particular service to Toc H itself within his power to do. And Paul, on the spur of the moment, mentioned that many of us had cherished a dream—not really expecting to be able to realise it—of Toc H some day possessing its birthplace, Talbot House at Poperinghe. It had, indeed, already been tentatively offered to us by its Belgian owner at a figure which we had not seriously considered, because we knew Toc H could not afford such expenditure in the face of urgent commitments elsewhere.

Lord Wakefield's ever-active imagination seized at once on the idea of Talbot House and what its possession might mean to Toc H. He forthwith commissioned Paul Slessor to return to Belgium and begin negotiations in Poperinghe for the property. How the Old House eventually became our own at last (it was only rented by Tubby during the War); how the gift was announced to the surprised and delighted family of Toc H by the Prince of Wales at the Birthday Festival of 1929; how it was refurnished, and occupied, with great thankfulness and joy, by Tubby and Neville Talbot in April, 1930; how it was formally opened, with the whole town of Poperinghe *en fête*, at Easter, 1931; and what its use has meant, week by week, ever since to Toc H members from far and near—these things, in detail, claim no space here. But the fact should not be forgotten that the great gift of the Old House to Toc H owes its origin to a sunset at St. Eloi in 1929, which gave unexpected play to Lord Wakefield's large heart and generous hand.

The Tenure of the Pool of Peace

Under Belgian law it is not possible for a foreigner to hold property in Belgium absolutely in his own right: it must be held, as to three-fifths, by Belgian nationals. This provision at once confronted us in the case of the Old House itself. The original deed of purchase was signed by Paul Slessor who for the time held the property, on Lord Wakefield's behalf, in his own name. Steps were then taken to form a trust, *L'Association de Talbot House de Poperinghe*, which was officially registered in the *Moniteur Belge* of April 25, 1930: Paul Slessor was its chairman and the Burgomasters of Poperinghe and Ypres were among its members. It is to this body that the crater at Spanbroekmolen has now been handed over. The Pool of Peace, therefore, is fittingly linked with Talbot House: neither of them is the absolute property of Toc H, but it is the wish of the Belgian members of the trust, who are acting with the greatest goodwill, that their administration and use should be left freely in our hands.

As in the case of the Old House, Lord Wakefield's benefaction did not stop short with the actual purchase. He knew how often the recipients of fine gifts of property are embarrassed because they have not the means to keep them up. Just as he provided the Old House with a generous endowment, so he has now given a sufficient sum for the maintenance in good order of Lone Tree Crater. It is not

proposed to undertake any such elaborate plan of laying it out as was at one time suggested: to do that would be to alter its character at unjustifiable expense. It will be necessary to fence round its boundaries to prevent the straying of cattle on its crumbling rim and possibly the gradual encroachment of neighbouring fields. Some sort of path round the lip may be advisable—for the edges tend to fall away into the water if too much trodden by visitors. And suitable plants like iris, a few clumps of flowers and some bushes, may well be planted with a careful eye to the whole picture. The terms of the purchase carry with them the “*puissances*” that no building is allowed, without permission of the owner, to be erected near by.

Lone Tree Crater is to remain, so long as the hand of Nature and the goodwill of men allow, a quiet place apart, a real Pool of Peace whose waters cover deep the marks of man’s violence and mirror the bright sky of noon, the sunset and the stars. Its setting is tillage of a marvellous richness and fruitfulness, obliterating all trace of the tortured ground which was once striven for with so much fortitude and agony: “the wrath of man is turned to God’s praise.” The dust of old friend and old foe is compounded in the rough rampart which encloses it—a good place for new friends to meet, not unmindful of the price paid by those who went before them, or of the legacy of duty left for themselves to fulfil. B. B.

A Note on “Pill-boxes”

A letter from Paul Slessor in *The Times* of April 10 announced that certain other landmarks of the War in the Salient had been saved from destruction. For some time the Belgian authorities have been demolishing large numbers of those concrete strong-posts, erected by both sides, which the soldier knew as “pill-boxes.” Last summer Tubby, assisted by Paul Slessor, approached the Belgian Government with a view to preserving enough of these shelters to mark the main outline of the struggle in which they played a vital part. In this he asked for, and received, the co-operation of the British Legion and the Ypres League. The Belgian Ministry concerned received these representations most cordially and have earmarked a line of 180 pill-boxes, extending from Langemarck on the North to the Messines Ridge on the South, which will be spared by the dynamiter. Colonel G. Thurlow, D.S.O., of the British Legion has done much of the hard work connected with this project and has written a historical guide to these positions, which will shortly be published by the Legion. The Flanders battlefield, which in almost every respect has been marvellously restored to an agricultural countryside, will, therefore, keep four enduring forms of monument—the stone divisional memorials, the crosses and headstones of its many cemeteries, the wayside stones (extending at intervals from the North Sea to the Alps) which mark the furthest limit of the German advance, and the concrete bastions of these ‘pill-boxes’ which men defended with their lives. All these should stand—in memory and solemn warning—for centuries to come, unless (as has seemed only too likely in recent months) our generation is to see once more all landmarks obliterated by the nations gone mad in a yet greater fratricidal struggle than the last.



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the Central Council, the governing body of Toc H, was held in London on April 22. For the first time for some years this event did not coincide with the Cup Final, but there was unusual activity, for a Saturday afternoon, round about Tower Hill. The Councillors assembled, as is the good custom, at 2 p.m. in All Hallows, where Tubby conducted a short act of worship in preparation for the Council meeting. The congregation then walked across the Hill to Forty-two, Trinity Square. 101 members (out of a "possible" 100 councillors and 26 *ex-officio* members) were present.

It was with a real feeling of incompleteness that the Council realised that Lord FORSTER could not, owing to ill-health, be present at the meeting, and a message of affection was accordingly sent to him in the name of those assembled. HARRY WILLINK (Deputy Chairman of Central Executive) was put into the chair in his stead. The Minutes of the two meetings of the Council in 1932 (the statutory meeting in April and an adjourned meeting in May), having been previously circulated, were signed; and the usual permission for non-members of the Council (*i.e.*, members of the staff present and overseas visitors) to take part in discussion but not to vote, was granted.

Appointment of Principal Officers

Sir CHARLES ("Tim") HARINGTON was appointed a *President* of Toc H in the place of the late Lord PLUMER; two of the three vacancies among the *Vice-Presidents* were filled by the appointment of H. LEIGH GROVES and H. SHINER, leaving the third place unoccupied for the present. WM. A. HURST proposed the re-appointment for a further two years (the life of the present Council) of PETER MONIE as *Honorary Administrator*. This, he said, required something more than a formal resolution, and he therefore paid a fine tribute to Peter's work for ten years in the building of Toc H at home and overseas, which was very warmly endorsed by the Council. In personal explanation, PETER said that he had himself determined not to continue in office after the present year, but circumstances prevented him leaving London as he had intended and he was perfectly willing to serve for another two years.

Appointment of Association Padres

The following appointments of Association Padres, made since the last meeting, were submitted by PAT LEONARD (as *Administrative Padre*) to the Council for confirmation under the provisions of the Charter (Article VI):—

(i) *Paid: At home*: Revs. E. R. Charlewood (C. of E.); F. E. Ford (C. of E.); A. E. Howard (Pres.); J. R. Palmer (Cong.). (All formerly Hon. Association Padres).

(ii) *Paid: Overseas*: Rev. F. W. Baggallay (C. of E.), formerly Hon. Association Padre.

(iii) *Unpaid: At home*: Revs. L. G. Appleton (C. of E.)*; H. E. Baldwin (Cong.)*; E. J. Bentley (C. of E.)†; E. H. Florey (C. of E.); E. R. W. Higham (C. of E.)*; Rt. Rev. John V. Macmillan (Bishop of Dover); Rev. F. G. Reeves (C. of E.)*; Canon W. H. W. Williams (C. of E.)†.

* Formerly on paid staff. † Hon. District Padre.

(iv) *Unpaid: Overseas*: Rt. Rev. G. D. Barne (Bishop of Lahore); Revs. D. I. Evans (C. of E. Buenos Aires); Harry Moss (C. of E. Haifa); Rt. Rev. B. C. Roberts (Bishop of Singapore). *All these appointments were confirmed.*

Appointment of Administrative Padre

PETER MONIE, in asking the Council to confirm the Central Executive's appointment of the Founder Padre as Administrative Padre until April, 1935, explained that the purpose of the plan was twofold—to relieve Tubby of the undue strain now upon him and to enable him to see more of the Toc H of to-day and to take his rightful place in it. If Tubby were willing to accept the office of Administrative Padre and also to undertake to do less work, the Central Executive were willing to let PAT LEONARD go to All Hallows as Deputy Vicar in order that he might help Tubby in both capacities, in the work of the church and of Toc H. Peter said that he would move the resolution, on behalf of the Central Executive, with one qualification—that Tubby should give them an assurance that he would not continue to overwork and that he would regard the problems of Toc H to-day as a large part of his business. If these assurances could not be given he thought that the Council would be wise to ask the Central Executive to reconsider the matter.

WM. A. HURST (Hon. Treasurer) seconded the resolution.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY (Trustee of Toc H) said that he was spokesman for a number of Tubby's friends who, while he was away in West Africa, had tried to devise a plan to lighten the burden upon him. They had been concerned about the state of his health and its effect upon his work. On the basis that the appointment of Pat Leonard to help Tubby at All Hallows would relieve him a good deal, they had proceeded to consider whether funds could be found to pay the stipend of a Deputy Vicar, and personally he had no doubt that sufficient money would be forthcoming. What they had to do was to get Tubby absolutely fit again—for his own sake and for that of Toc H.

HARRY WILLINK (Chairman) expressed thanks to Lord Salisbury and other friends of Tubby for the help they were offering both for Tubby and for Toc H; he hoped the plan would go through. What they wanted was to see Tubby freed to exercise again his extraordinary gifts of leadership among men of 20-30.

TUBBY, speaking with great emphasis, said that the issues must be very clearly faced. He had never deserted Toc H. There was, therefore, no question of his "coming back" to it. Every stroke of work he had done at All Hallows or elsewhere was for Toc H. Peter had said that he was wanted for Toc H of the present and immediate future, not only for Toc H of the past and remote future. But the past followed up the present very closely, and there were many old friends and benefactors of Toc H for whom he himself was now the only link. They had helped Toc H in the past, and Toc H could not neglect them in the present. Then there was a mass of personal work connected with Toc H overseas which he could not drop now. His whole soul was with Toc H overseas; it meant to him something terrific in its potentialities. The whole future of Toc H overseas was bound up with the chaplaincies which the great commercial companies had now begun to create and which were staffed by Toc H men, building Toc H across immense areas of the world. That had been his concern: was that neglecting Toc H? Tubby went on to say that nowadays he could serve best not by making many speeches but by writing; he was happiest when writing; if they wanted him to live he must live with his pen. He could not visit the Areas regularly, steadily: they needed a younger man for that. And he was certain that he must not undertake anything approaching what was called 'administration.'

P. SUTHERLAND GRAEME (Central Executive) then proposed that the whole matter should be referred back to the Central Executive. H. SHINER (E. Mid. and W. Sussex) seconded, and this proposal was agreed to.

During the tea interval, a consultation took place, as the result of which a note was handed to the Chairman and read to the Council at a later stage in the meeting. The

note (in Tubby's handwriting) said: 'It begins to look as if we were being led towards a plan by which Pat's work on Tower Hill would not remove him from Toc H H.Q., while Tubby would be freer to assist Toc H in various home issues.' This was received with hearty applause.

Appointment of Central Executive

Election papers had been issued to Councillors as they entered the meeting, with instructions to vote for 16 candidates on the list—eight on the "London" list and eight on the "Rest of Great Britain and Ireland" list: this was in accordance with the usual practice. The "London" list, as it stood, contained seven names, the "Rest" nine, and no further nominations were put forward. On the motion of KEITH FRASER (Central Executive) the name of BRIAN DICKSON (Southern Area) was transferred from the "Rest" to the "London" list (as he is now resident in London) making the lists eight each. No election, therefore, was necessary and the new Central Executive was declared appointed as follows:—

LONDON.

A. W. BERRY (*London Area Exec.*)
F. C. BRABY (*late London Area Exec.*)
L. F. BROWNE (*Mark VII*).
B. T. DICKSON (*Southern Area Exec.*).
KEITH FRASER (*East London*).
M. P. G. LEONARD (*H.Q.*)
L. PRIDEAUX BRUNE (*Houses Ctee.*).
H. U. WILLINK (*Deputy Chairman*).

REST OF G.B. AND IRELAND.

Sir W. CAMPION (*Vice-President*).
P. SUTHERLAND GRAEME (*Eastern Area Exec.*).
Sir CHARLES HARINGTON (*President*).*
CYRIL OSBORNE (*E. Mids. Area Exec.*).
H. F. SAWBRIDGE (*Western Area Padre*).
RODNEY J. R. SCOTT (*Capt., Royal Navy*).
H. TODD THORNBERRY (*S.E. Area Exec.*).
G. LL. WILLIAMS (*S.E. Area Padre*).

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS.

Rev. P. B. CLAYTON (*Founder Padre*). Wm. A. HURST (*Hon. Treasurer*).
P. W. MONIE (*Hon. Administrator*).

* Since the Council meeting "Tim" Harington has notified H.Q. that, owing to his appointment as Governor of Gibraltar, he will be unable to serve on the Central Executive.

The Accounts and Annual Report

Wm. A. HURST (*Hon. Treasurer*), in presenting the Accounts, pointed out that they were set out in the Annual Report in detail so that everyone could realise what each Area was doing in the way of becoming self-supporting. He dealt in some detail with Staff charges: "You must not be terrified," he said, "as I hear some people are, at the fact that we spend so much of our money on Staff. That is what the great bulk of Toc H money is for—to provide whole-time men. Their salaries remain as they have always been, very moderate; and a year in which staff charges are not increased will be manifestly a bad year."

The net increase on *Administrative* salaries for the year under review was £744: he explained how in several instances the increases were due to action taken in 1930-31 which did not show their full effect in the Account year in which they were done but subsequently. In *Office Staff* charges there was an increase of £297, due to assistance in the Registrar's department, additional typing staff in an Area and various increments. In *Padres' salaries* there was an increase of £318 (Methodist, plus £240; Baptist, plus £158; Anglican, minus £67; Presbyterian, minus £13). *Travelling expenses*, taking the increase of staff into account, were relatively lower. Seven more men, on reaching their third year of service, had become eligible for the *Staff Pension fund* (created as the result of discussion by the Council in 1929). *Voluntary cuts in pay* made by members of the staff in the financial crisis of Autumn, 1931, amounted to £577.

The Hon. Treasurer then called attention to certain figures in the accounts for the five months November 1, 1932, to March 31, 1933, in comparison with the figures for the previous financial year covered by the Annual Report:—

Receipts of the five months were £18,362, i.e., three-quarters of the previous year's total income. This was due to the Royal Matinée having produced £5,606 and to the Mrs. Alexander legacy of £2,914.

Payments for the same five months were £10,832, being a trifle less than five-twelfths of the previous year's expenditure.

Headquarters overdraft at the end of the financial year (October 31) had been £8,560. On March 31 it was reduced to £1,876 11s. 8d. (Applause). He did not think too much stress should be laid on the goodness of the figures for this year so far as they went, lest some should think they were now free to launch out into all sorts of new expenditure.

Overseas Fund: received last year, £1,450; *spent* (on Canada) £143, leaving a balance of £1,307. *Received this year*, £268 (plus opening balance of £1,307); *spent*, to March 31—£776. The *Total Receipts* of the Overseas Fund, from its formation in 1932 to March 31, 1933, were £1,718. *Total expended*, £1,515, made up as follows:—India (Padre), £250; South Africa, £865; Canada (Holmes and Sawers), £400. This left a balance of £203 not yet allotted, against which there would be expenditure (amount not yet known) on Australia in connection with the forthcoming visit to England of Padre Baldwin of Victoria.

He paid a tribute to Mus and the Registrar's department, the work of which was a model for anyone, and to the Finance Committee which had taken risks that most business men would not have taken, in the faith that they would be justified. He believed that they had reached a stage in their finances where Toc H could look forward to the future with greater satisfaction than sometimes in the past.

PETER MONIE said that there had been a period of grave anxiety when they had had to consider whether they dare go on or whether they must break up the Area organisation they were building. Hurst had been resolute against any break up: if their Hon. Treasurer had been lacking in faith and vision there would have been serious trouble.

SIR CUSACK WALTON (Hon. General Secretary) presented the *Annual Report* in a brief speech—for he said that the history of Toc H was not written in Annual Reports but in the lives of men, and those present knew what was happening there, without need for explanation.

PETER MONIE rose to make two comments on the Report. First, that if Scotland and Northern Ireland were to be regarded as integral parts of Toc H at home, efforts must be made during the year to provide them with whole-time staff in due proportion to other Areas: this would mean, on the same scale, four men for Scotland and one for Northern Ireland. At present, Scotland had the services, in an honorary capacity, of one man—COLIN MACPHERSON, who had shouldered the responsibility in the absence of BOB SAWERS in Eastern Canada. Northern Ireland had to rely on visiting members of the staff from the North Western Area. Secondly, he announced that arrangements were being made to lend the services of HERBERT LEGGATE (North Western Area Padre) to New Zealand.

In reply to a question by Dr. A. GREENE (Norwich) as to why Toc H was restricted to Northern Ireland, the Hon. Administrator pointed out that there was one unit, Dublin, in the Free State, but that the extension of Toc H there was made extremely difficult at present by sectarian and political factors.

This concluded the statutory business of the Council. Two matters of 'Special Business' followed, after a break for tea.

Proposal to abolish the Annual Subscription

R. CANNING (Birmingham North) moved: *That the Central Executive be requested to consider the question of the amendment of the Bye-Laws so as to abolish the Annual Subscription to Toc H.*

He said in the early days the attempt had been made to run Toc H on annual subscriptions from members and donations from non-members, the latter being obtained and used mostly for endowments or capital expenditure. It was soon found that Toc H could not maintain its organisation and provide for its normal expenses by means of capitation fees, and it was also found that Branches and Groups could not always 'cut their cloth' according to their portions of the annual subscriptions. Both Headquarters and Toc H families came to rely on extra free-will gifts from members with very happy results. The income obtained voluntarily by Headquarters and by all but the *most* exceptional units was now probably at least twice as much as that obtained compulsorily in the form of annual subscriptions. Why not therefore drop payment by compulsion in favour of the more successful payment by free gift, instead of persisting in a mixed method of obtaining income which was very awkward to explain to the newcomer? That was the expediency argument; there was a shorter and equally important argument. There was a spiritual value in giving and none in paying what one had got to pay. Why persist in demanding money when merely expecting it would give results beneficial to both parties? Moreover, few spiritual movements had annual subscriptions. They would do well to come into line and distinguish themselves even more from the societies and institutions from which members expected to get something in return for their annual subscriptions. Now for the personal argument. There were thousands who disliked the payment of lump sums, however small, but did not object to a small contribution weekly or monthly. It might be argued that they could by arrangement with the Treasurer pay their subscriptions in weekly instalments, but that caused complications for the poor Treasurer, and the mere fact of seeing on the membership form that there was an annual subscription was a deterrent to some prospective members, particularly the multitude of good fellows who had as much as they could do to live on their earnings from one Friday to the next. More than ever now that unemployment was eating into the souls of men they wanted it to be possible to enrol members who could pay very little or even nothing, and the abolition of the annual subscription was a necessary preliminary. Summing up, neither nationally nor locally was Toc H run on annual subscriptions. Voluntary giving was more successful and of immensely greater spiritual value than compulsory paying. The annual subscription was a bar to some men's membership—let them cut it out. Let them introduce simplicity and straightforwardness into the finances of Toc H.

The resolution was seconded by F. G. CHESWORTH (Birmingham South).

T. TANQUERAY (Mid-Sussex) held that the annual subscription was too useful an instrument for disciplinary purposes to be abolished.

VIC MARTIN (Oxford) said that the subscription was no financial bar to the keen member who was in employment. Unemployed members in his Branch were not required to pay a subscription.

THE HON. ADMINISTRATOR reminded Councillors that there was definite sanction for remitting the subscription in the case of members out of work.

The resolution was put to the meeting and *lost by a large majority.*

The Limitation of Branch Status

H. TODD THORNBERRY (Central Executive) moved: *That the Council welcomes the decision of the Central Executive regarding the limitation of the period for which Lamps will be granted to Branches in future.**

He said he was speaking to them as members of the Council of Toc H, a body of picked men, leaders of Toc H, who were responsible for building Toc H now and in the future. He would speak to them as men prepared to deal with realities. What were the realities regarding the life of a unit of Toc H? A few men got together in some place and they 'groped.' They learnt about Toc H, began to function a little bit as Toc H men functioned, and perhaps after a year they applied for recognition as a Group of Toc H. If everything was 'O.K.' they were granted Group status and received a Rushlight. At that time there was great keenness and enthusiasm. They went on as a Group moving towards Branch status, keen, active, steady. Ultimately they got their Branch status and their Lamp of Maintenance. They would, he supposed, go on with enthusiasm and efficiency for a time; but looking ahead a few years, what was sometimes the position, what sometimes happened, say, eight years after they had begun their Toc H work? In many cases some of the earlier men had left. Some would have got married and developed new ties. They were not less keen on Toc H but had less time to give to it. Possibly there might be a weakening keenness. They were dealing with human beings and they all knew that their enthusiasms after a time weakened. They might weaken because of other ties, other interests; they might weaken because a man had given so much and had been, as one of their padres had said, 'squeezed dry.' They might weaken because a man found that Toc H had changed; it might have changed in some way that resulted in its having a less strong appeal for him than it had before. That might happen to any unit. The Guard of the Lamp and the leaders of Toc H in the Districts would know that there were units which had once been up to standard but were no longer worthily maintaining their Lamps. If Toc H was to play its part in the lives of men in the years ahead it was their task to set a high standard and to see that that standard was maintained. They could not in honour afford to have Lamps, given as they were in remembrance of the Elder Brethren, dedicated as they were dedicated, made a mockery of by their use in units which were no longer true to Toc H.

The Central Executive felt strongly upon the matter. They felt that the time had come when they should try to do something to preserve that standard of Toc H. It was therefore decided that in future when Branch status was granted to a Group it should be granted for a period of three or four years, and that after that time the unit should be free to apply for its status to be re-granted. Who was to decide whether that status was to be re-granted or not? It had been suggested that the unit itself was most fitted to decide whether it was worthily maintaining its Lamp or not. But who of those present was best fitted to form an impartial opinion of his own character? None, surely. They could not expect that a unit about which there might be some doubt was the body best fitted to decide as to its fitness to hold a Lamp. The arrangement proposed would be especially helpful in the case of units which had become self-centred, self-satisfied, unaware of the growth and standard of the units around them. Such a unit was not competent to decide whether it should keep a Lamp or not. The Guards of the Lamp were composed of men picked because of their knowledge of Toc H, their knowledge of the units in their Districts and Areas. They could not give details of all the petty troubles of a unit, but they were men who were regarded as having the best general knowledge of the units in their Areas. Here he would like to sweep away an illusion that the Guards of the Lamp flattered themselves that they could form an accurate opinion of a unit's health merely

* Details of this decision are given in the February JOURNAL, p. 65-66.

from a statistical report. The Guards of the Lamp did not imagine anything of the sort. The Guards used the reports, but they also had personal knowledge of the units. They had means of getting information from the Area leaders and from District Committees, and they were able by their visits to units to form a fair judgment how one unit stood in relation to other units in the Area. Of course, the Guards would make mistakes, but in an extraordinary number of cases they had displayed an uncanny prescience and had hit the nail on the head in spite of the Annual Rekindling Report. He submitted that the Guard of the Lamp was a more competent body to deal with the matter than any unit or even the Council.

The Central Executive had taken no action as regards *old* Branches. They hoped, however, that some of the older Branches would put themselves into line with the newly-formed Branches and offer back their Lamps and re-apply for Branch status. What had they to fear? Healthy units would have nothing to fear; they would get their Branch status re-granted. Those which were moribund would not get their Branch status re-granted. Did they wish that such Branches should? Were they going to say that such Branches should continue to hold their Lamps? The Lamp of Maintenance was the property of Toc H; it was not the permanent possession of any particular unit. He would ask them to approve of the effort the Central Executive had made to ensure that a high standard should be maintained in Toc H, that Branches should be kept up to that standard and be kept true to Toc H principles and purposes, that they should be elastic and adaptable to the new and changing conditions of life and to the growing scope of Toc H.

The Resolution was seconded by C. MACPHERSON (Edinburgh).

L. W. ELLEN (Kingston) asked whether it was proposed to swoop down suddenly on a Branch without warning and say 'You are no longer worthy of a Lamp.' Would a Branch be given any chance to recover before its Lamp was taken away from it?

R. R. CALKIN (General Secretary) said there was no question of 'swooping down' on a Branch. With regard to new Branches, which were the only ones touched on by the Resolution, the decision was made at the time Branch status was granted. Such Branches would hold their Lamps until the end of a certain year. Six months before that date, it had been suggested, such a Branch should apply for a re-grant of its status and the Area Guard would proceed to consider the application and would recommend accordingly to its Executive. If the Lamp were taken away, there remained the question of status. Such a unit ceased to be a unit of Toc H. The procedure suggested was that what was left of it should apply for sanction as a Group and if that sanction were granted it would then receive a Rushlight in the ordinary way. That was only a suggestion, and although it would be permissible for the Lamp to be taken away and for a Rushlight to be given at once, he personally did not consider that was the best method. That merely made the proceeding automatic. It was better that the Branch, having realised its condition, should say: 'We resign our status and our Lamp, and are now going to start again.' Such a body would get together, start groping and eventually apply, like any other individual unit, for sanction as a Group and receive a Rushlight.

A. D. NASH (Derby) opposed the motion. It appeared to him wrong to think that in Toc H as a whole there was a tendency to weaken. The Executive must have thought that there was such a tendency, otherwise the proposal would never have been propounded. He suggested that the better way, if that tendency did exist, was to go to the individual membership itself and not to the unit; to lengthen the probationary period rather than to go for the Branch. Secondly, he thought it was a shot at the freedom of Toc H: there was an element of bureaucracy in the proposal. Another argument against the proposal was that if it became universal the individuality of the various Branches would be under-

mined: they would have Branches copying each other. Again, since the proposal did not extend to the old Branches there would immediately arise two types of Branches, 'freehold' Branches and 'leasehold' Branches. Leasehold property was not considered as good as freehold property, and there was a possibility that Branch status would not be such a coveted thing as it had been in the past.

T. BAKER (S. Durham), while supporting the resolution, said that there was a feeling, due probably to misunderstanding, that the taking away of the Lamp was a slight upon the donor. He thought the position should be made clear. TODD THORNBERRY, in answer, said that very careful consideration had been given by the Guard of the Lamp to the position of the donor. A suggested form of letter was already available from which they would see that the position of the donor had been put right.

G. PAUL (Croydon) said that while he agreed with what Todd Thornberry had said he did not think the present proposal solved the difficulty. He particularly objected to the fixing of three years. He would put the third year in the life of a Branch as its most critical year. It was then that the men who had started the Group and had brought it to its Branch status were beginning to drop out and their places taken by younger men who were just feeling their feet. He would like the proposal referred back.

F. A. NEVER (E. & W. Surrey) said he agreed with every word of the mover of the Resolution, but he thought there was one flaw in it. If carried, they would have a voluntary and involuntary system going on at the same time. He would like to propose an amendment to the Resolution. The mover said that existing Branches would be asked to subject themselves voluntarily to the system proposed for new Branches. That was not indicated in the Resolution but only in the article in the JOURNAL. He would therefore suggest an amendment by adding to the Resolution, after the words 'in future'—*and earnestly hope that existing Branches will forthwith subject themselves to the same system.*'

REX CALKIN said that already, without their asking, eleven offers had come in from Branches in England and Wales and one from overseas. He knew for certain that there were many other Branches willing to relinquish, and many others considering it favourably.

BARCLAY BARON (Editorial Secretary), speaking for the Central Guard of the Lamp, said the new rule did not come from the Central Guard. It was presented to them by the Central Executive as a *fait accompli*, and they welcomed it. They had since spent a good deal of time working out the details and had passed on suggestions to Area Guards. There had been many cases in the past of Branches in a difficult position; there had been instances of Lamps being either surrendered or taken away. Every one of those cases had presented great difficulties and much heart-burning. The present proposal made things much more easy. Secondly, speaking in his capacity as Editor of the JOURNAL, he confessed that the article referred to was written by him. It was simply an attempt to translate the legal phraseology of the Executive's minute into language which the ordinary man could understand. Thirdly, speaking as Councillor No. 100, representing the General Branch which had no Lamp and never would be given a Lamp, he viewed the proposal with approval.

G. L. HAGGEN (Leeds) said he wanted to make it clear at the outset that although he did not agree with the decision of the Central Executive, he did not lack confidence in the Executive. He was second to no man in his admiration for the work they had done and the sacrifice they had made in the doing of it, but he thought they sometimes made mistakes, and they had made one in this instance. It rather concerned him that they should have made a change of the kind proposed without first of all consulting the Central Council. When all was said and done, the Central Council did represent more than any other body in Toc H the great proportion of men who were in touch with the life of Toc H in the country. They ought to have been consulted. They had been told that

the thing had been considered for years. He was a member of his own District Committee and he had never heard a word of it until he opened the JOURNAL on that memorable morning and 'went off the deep end.'* He thought it was wrong; he thought the Central Executive should have consulted the Council. He was perfectly satisfied that the thing should be given a trial if it commended itself to the majority of the Council. But their opinion was being asked for after the decision had been made. He thought one had a right to complain. The Executive had prejudiced the issue by the mere fact that they had made a decision and had come to the Council and asked them to confirm it. He felt it put one who was opposing in a very invidious and improper position. Units should have the utmost freedom that was possible subject only to this, that they should not be allowed to let Toc H down. They already had power to degrade a Branch. As a matter of fact, he had seconded a resolution whereby one Branch was so degraded. He regarded that as the most disagreeable thing in his Toc H past! After all, it seemed to him that a Branch should have the right to be tried by the representatives of Branches throughout the country. It should not be necessary for them to make a noise about a thing of that sort; it should have the right to come to the Council and they (the Council) would see that justice was done. The constitution required that they should be heard. He thought the decision showed, as other decisions had shown, that in some way the Executive did not trust the plain man in Toc H. Take, for instance, the election of a Chairman of a District Committee. In the old days they were allowed to elect their own Chairman; under the new constitution the Chairman was appointed for them. Why? There was something wrong; and he thought things were worse than they knew. In order to build Toc H they had got to trust men; he did not like having things imposed on him. He did not think that anyone could say with justice that applying for Branch status was easy. It was very difficult to judge a Branch. The Guard of the Lamp got over it by making the Branch prove its case. Once Branch status had been granted and it was desired to take it away, the Guard had got to prove to the satisfaction of the Council that the Branch concerned was unworthy of it. The thing needed further consideration, and he would ask the Council to vote against the Resolution.

D. ANDERSON (Newcastle) was entirely opposed to the Resolution as unnecessary and superfluous. They already had the machinery for taking away a Lamp. They had heard a great deal about the need for faith in financial matters and now they had cast upon them the fear that sooner or later this or that Branch would not be pulling its weight. No unit was one hundred per cent. all the time. They had come to be ashamed of certain units because in some of them there were only two or three keen spirits carrying on the work. They seemed to be welcoming weakness rather than giving to their men increasing strength to carry on. He maintained that where there were two or three keen spirits who were maintaining their Lamp worthily, it should not be taken from them.

L. D. MARTYN (East London) reminded them that a good tree needed to be pruned to bear good fruit. Surely the whole point and purpose of the motion was to stimulate units to greater efforts and make themselves better units. Someone gave a Lamp and gave it in memory of an Elder Brother. The Lamp was the symbol; the Branch the living memory. If a Branch failed to keep that memory worthily the Lamp was returned, not to the donor but to Toc H, who found a living memory that was worthy of it. Supposing a unit did lose its Branch status—it could go back to Group status and re-earn it.

Padre H. F. SAWBRIDGE (Western Area) in supporting the motion, said he wanted to claim freedom for the younger members. He would take a personal example. Five of them in that room were in 1922 a little team of men trying to form Toc H in a certain place (Leicester). They applied for a Lamp and it was eventually granted them. He

* See his letter in the March JOURNAL, p. 135.

wanted the youngsters, the successors of that team, to have the chance of earning their Lamp. For that reason he supported the motion. Someone had asked how long Toc H would endure. If it was merely going to be a society with no idea of adventure, of going forward and upward, then he rather hoped he would endure for rather less than three years. They wanted to keep the adventure spirit in Toc H.

PETER MONIE said that he was going to approach the matter from a personal angle. He was the only person in that room who by his own choice had been put in precisely the same position as they were challenging the old Branches to accept. When the Charter was drawn up it provided for the appointment of two officials called the Administrator and the Administrative Padre. If they looked at the Charter they would find that those appointments were not made for a term of years but for life. In 1926 he and Herbert Fleming discussed the matter and they came to the conclusion that it was not right that Toc H should be committed to that. They decided to resign their appointments in order that they might be, if it was the wish of the Council, re-appointed for two years: there would be no difficulty in getting rid of them when they were no longer wanted. Herbert Fleming died in 1926. He (Peter) resigned in 1927 and was re-appointed for two years, and all subsequent appointments had been made for two years. There was a complete analogy between the two cases. To the Branches of Toc H they entrusted the honour of Toc H as they had entrusted the honour of Toc H to him and to Herbert Fleming. They felt the responsibility to be too great unless confidence in them was renewed from time to time. That was exactly what they were proposing to the Branches.

ERIC BRABY said that it had been suggested that the Central Executive did not trust the rank and file. Why had they created the Areas? It was because they trusted the rank and file to look after their own affairs. The trouble really was that people did not trust their own Area Guards of the Lamp. They, the Guard, were the people who knew the Branches thoroughly, and it seemed that they were the body to exercise judgment and fair play.

W. E. PALMER (South Somerset) asked if the Central Executive was committed to the motion. A. GREENE (Norwich) considered that a spokesman from the Central Executive should have put the case against the motion.*

PETER MONIE said that the motion introduced by Todd Thornbery was 'that the Council welcomes the decision of the Central Executive.' It was for the Council and not for the Executive to say whether any addition to Thornbery's proposition be adopted or not.

THE CHAIRMAN then called upon the PROPOSER to reply.

H. TODD THORNBERY, in a brief speech, said most of the criticisms had their roots in misconception. He assured the Council that the Guard of the Lamp would not relax any of their care in considering each case on its merits. Every possible chance would be given to every unit, and the scheme would be administered, the Council could be confident, in the true Toc H spirit. He then moved the motion as it stood on the Agenda:—

That the Council welcomes the decision of the Central Executive regarding the limitation of the period for which Lamps will be granted to Branches in future.

The motion was *carried by a large majority, twelve voting against.*

F. A. ENNEVER then moved his amendment to add to the motion—and earnestly hope that existing Branches will forthwith subject themselves to the same system.

This was seconded by R. FAWCETT (Scotland) and *carried, with six dissentients.*

The meeting was closed with prayer by PAT LEONARD, and afterwards many Councillors took supper with TUBBY at the Press Club.

* See a letter from Todd Thornbery on page 225.

THE HALF-TIME PARTY

ONE year ago, London met together in the now familiar interior of the Princess Hall, Lambeth Baths, to welcome back Tubby from his so airy visiting of his Persian parish. This year the Vicar had returned from West Africa, full of concern for all the problems that face our men everywhere overseas. "On Active Service" was the theme running through his sixty-minute discourse at the Half-Time Party on March 25. Whether he was directing attention to the maps of Africa displayed like banners on the wall, or telling of the tragic-comedy of Liberia, of lepers, or of race distinctions, behind it was the challenge, "you are on active service; what are you and Toc H going to do about it?" Kites rise against the wind, and Toc H must and is rising at the threat of evils to face, rough places to be made smooth.

West Africa is not the death trap it used to be, but life there, beset with the perils of fever and malignant insect life, is sufficiently insecure to give those words "active service" real meaning. In spite of these disabilities the units are forging ahead. They must have encouragement and unsalting support. Facing his audience, Tubby said, "You must be their support; their background must be all your faces and all your prayers."

Every European race has had a bad record in West Africa, until vested interests were bought out. But there are still problems, some beyond our control, and some within our powers to tackle. There is the great responsibility of introducing a commercial system from Europe into a State such as Nigeria with adequate and Christian guidance. There are still places, like Kano, which are ruled by Mohammedan Emirs and into which no Christian missionary may enter. Finally, there is leprosy, a more terrible form of slavery than that rooted out by the English. Everywhere there the cry is for man-power with a little science and the touch of Christ to combat this evil thing.

A new wording for the task of Toc H Tubby gave the membership. It is a quotation from the Litany that came to him as he walked one early morning in a native village. "That it may please Thee to strengthen such as do stand; and to comfort and help the weak-hearted; and to raise up them that fall; and finally to beat down Satan under our feet." This is the job of Toc H; a restatement of the Four Points of the Compass for 1933. From whence shall come the strength for this? Tubby summed it up with a term from current policies, "We must never disarm Christianity of the Cross of Christ."

It has been said that in the House of Commons before the War, a certain statesman intervened in a debate that was hot and acrimonious. When he had finished his speech, the House was silenced, and could only rise and go home. The pettinesses were reproved and the individual's duty pointed out by a few earnest words. So when Tubby came to an end all else afterwards was an anti-climax. Our little distresses and worries were cancelled by the charge and the challenge that Tubby had delivered.

In spite of Mike Underhill having blacked his face and put on the white robe with scarlet markings of the Nigerian warrior to tell the date and fact of their journey, in spite of the high spirits of the musical entertainers, and in spite of the Toc H Players' presentation of "Money makes a Difference" with great skill and humour, it was for Family Prayers that we were waiting. This office Appy did, as his last act before joining the staff of St. Martin-in-the-Fields.

This Half-Time Party was apparently for many a "Mi Carême" in the matter of smoking and other Lenten deprivations, but the will to discipline was there in the gathering. The challenge was to be answered. For so we vowed in the flickering light of the Lamp.

“BERKYNGECHIRCHE”

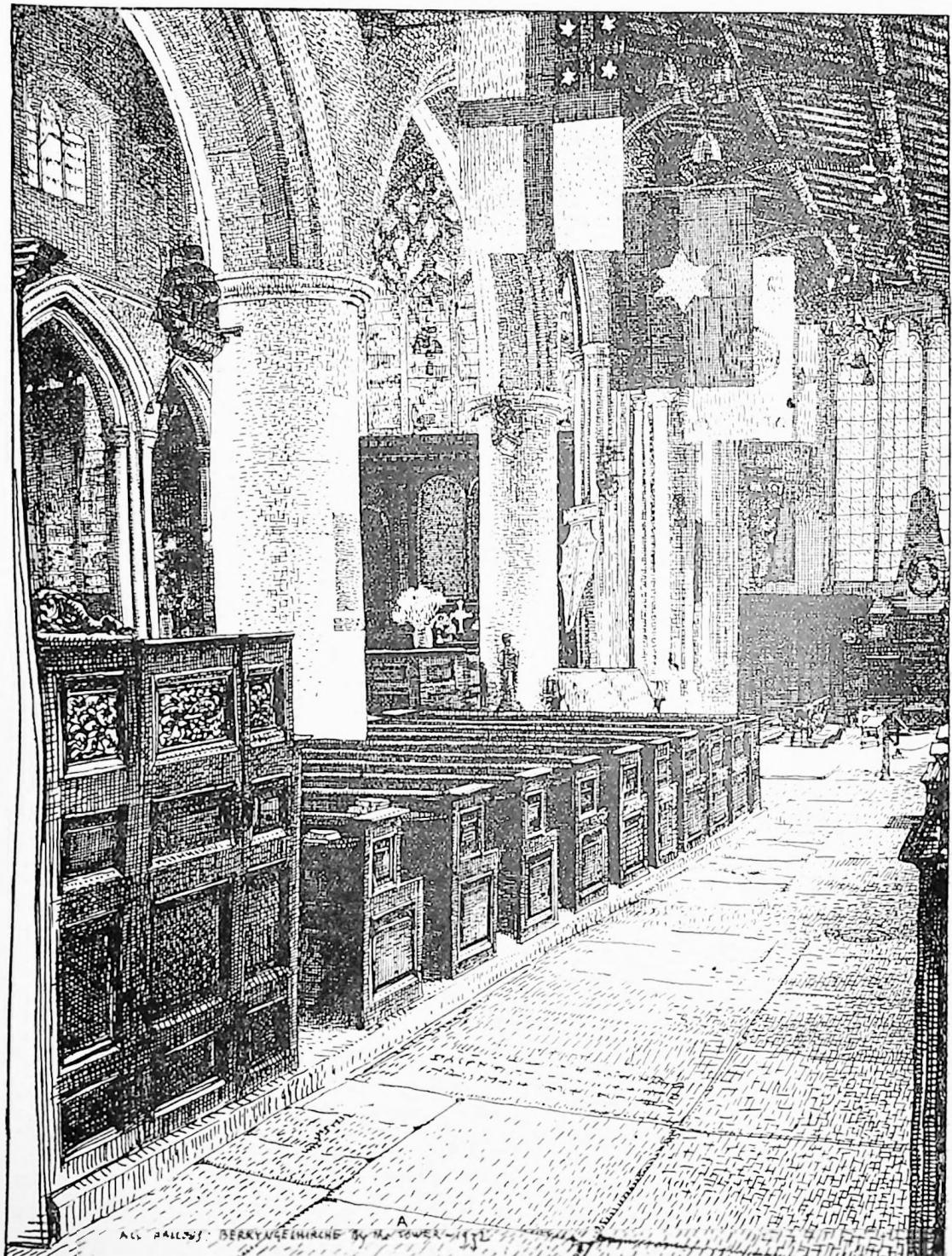
THE old church of All Hallows Barking-by-the-Tower—“Berkyngechirche,” to give it an ancient name—has so many friends and lovers in ToC H at home and overseas, that we take this opportunity of presenting them with two pictures of it from slightly unusual points of view.

The drawing by Hubert Williams (Plate XXI.) first published in *Blue Peter*, the magazine of the sea, in 1931, shows the entrance to the Porch Room, at the corner of the short Byward Street, an address now familiar to men all over the world. From the moment, in December, 1922, when Tubby became Vicar of All Hallows, the Porch Room has been the moving hub whose spokes radiate far and wide in every direction, an office and how much more than an office! In early days, Tubby was sometimes found sleeping there at night—for the real vicarage of the old church was lost to it centuries ago in the rebuilding of London City and the ‘acting’ vicarage was miles away near Regent’s Park, the house in Fitzroy Square which is now Mark VII. The notepaper of All Hallows and its multifarious literature bear the imprint of the “Porch Room, Byward Street, E.C.3,” and words spoken and written there have vitally affected the lives of many men, far and near.

The church tower, which is well shown in the drawing, has its own history. An earlier spire, which you can see on Elizabethan maps and panoramas of London, so severely shaken by a gunpowder explosion in 1650 that it had to be replaced. The present brick tower, less distinguished than we can imagine its predecessor to have been, has the unique interest of being the only piece of ecclesiastical building in London produced under Cromwell, who was more wont to destroy churches than to preserve them. It had its great moment soon afterwards, in the Great Fire in 1666. The Navy Office stood in Seething Lane, hard by, and its Secretary, Samuel Pepys the diarist, fearing for the safety of the records, prevailed upon Admiral Sir William Penn (churchwarden of All Hallows, and father of the Quaker William Penn, who was baptized in the church) to bring up all the workmen from Woolwich and Deptford shipyards to aid in stemming the Fire by blowing up houses round about. The next evening Pepys, who had worked indefatigably throughout the crisis, found that “by blowing up of houses, and the great help given by the workmen out of the King’s yards, sent by Sir William Penn, there is a good stop given to it, as well at Mark Lane end as ours; it having only burned the dial of Barking Church, and part of the porch, and was there quenched.” He then went up the tower, not for curiosity, but for practical observation: “I up to the top of Barking steeple, and there saw the saddest sight . . . everywhere great fires, oil-cellars and brimstone and other things burning. I became afraid to stay there long, and therefore down again as fast as I could, the fire being spread as far as I could see it.” The steep and winding wooden staircase down which the excited Samuel Pepys clattered that day still stands unchanged in the tower. His work was not yet over, and after four hours’ rest he was at it again, and there is no doubt that it is due to his intervention and insistence that All Hallows escaped the destruction which befell nearly all the City churches, including great St. Paul’s itself.



ALL HALLOWS PORCH ROOM AND TOWER.
[Reproduced by courtesy of "Blue Peter."]



ALL HALLOWS, BERRYNGECHIRCHE BY THE TOWER. 1552.

THE SOUTH AISLE OF ALL HALLOWS.
[Reproduced by courtesy of the London Underground Railway.]

The other excellent drawing (Plate XXII.) has just been published, together with interiors of three other City churches on one sheet, by the London Underground Railway. The same company, which has done such fine service for many years to the cause of poster art and to the Londoner's knowledge of his city and its surrounding country, has also just published a coloured poster, not identical with the pen drawing, but showing the same part of All Hallows: this is one of a set of four London church interiors.* The South Aisle of the church is shown. This is the least familiar part to most people, for while the centre of the church, with its beautiful pulpit, its brass Communion rails and noble East window, has often been depicted, and the North Aisle, the 'Cœur de Lion' chapel which holds the Prince's Lamp, the Forster Memorial and many relics and symbols of Toc H, is known to every visitor, the South Aisle, so far as we know, has never attracted the artist before. Actually, it contains much of interest, and when the plan for its refurnishing, which has long been in mind, can be carried out, it may well rival the North Aisle in beauty. The intention is to make this South Aisle eventually a "Mariners' Chapel," a sailors' counterpart to the North Aisle chapel which has much association with soldiers—the crusading King whose name it bears, the recumbent bronze figure of Lord Forster's son in uniform, the sword of Edmund Street, the window to Lord Plumer, etc. In order to restore the South Aisle to its former, and proper, use as a chapel the high stone pyramid, bearing the memorial bust of a Queen Anne lady, which is seen against the East window in the picture, would have to be moved—as a similar pyramid, decorated with a heavily bewigged gentleman, in the Cœur de Lion Chapel was moved—to give place to an altar table. Alec Smithers' design for the East end, with its ships in full sail flanking the altar on either side, has long been on view in the church. And already an unmistakeable touch of the sea is given (as the Plate shows) by the 'house-flags' of different lines and by the models of ships which hang—as in many a seafarers' church abroad (e.g., *Notre Dame des Flots* at Treport)—between the arches: each carries its own light on board.

There are good reasons, both ancient and modern, for a Mariners' Chapel in All Hallows. In medieval times one of the principal side-chapels in the church was dedicated to the patron saint of sailors, Saint Nicholas, known to children as Santa Claus, and all through the centuries there has been a natural connection between this Thames-side church and the sea. One of the earliest legacies recorded at All Hallows dates from 1277 when one, Edward Grobbe, left his good ship *Blewebelle* to be sold for the maintenance of a chantry there, and nearly two hundred years later a shipwright in the parish bequeathed his lighter *Le John* for a similar purpose. There were many generous gifts from the "galleymen" of Genoa and Venice, and the arms of the Merchant Adventurers of Hamburg are to be seen on one of the church brasses. On the south wall hangs the banner of Pennsylvania (partly seen in the coloured poster but not in the drawing), with a full-rigged ship and a plough

* Both posters can be had from the London Underground Railway Office, 55, Broadway, Westminster, S.W.1, price 2s. each. The drawing of All Hallows, one of four on the sheet, measures 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 13 ins. The coloured picture measures 19 x 28 ins. Of the other three posters in the coloured set, one shows Southwark Cathedral, the place of our Festival Thanksgiving in 1925, and another the Chapel of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, where Herbert Fleming (first Administrative Padre of Toc H) was chaplain at the time of his death in 1927.

upon it, above the wall-tablet which commemorates the baptism of that redoubtable Quaker colonist, William Penn, in All Hallows. The connection of Toc H to-day with overseas adventure and with seafaring men is too clear to need more than mention here. And outside, on Tower Hill, stands the great building of the Port of London Authority, one of whose senior officers is a churchwarden of All Hallows at present, and next to it, the historic headquarters of Trinity House which safeguards the coastwise shipping of Britain. In front of these buildings the Merchant sailors of the Empire, who are to be numbered among the Elder Brethren of the War, have their memorial colonnade. All Hallows, which has played a part for twelve and a half centuries in so many lives, famous and humble alike, is clearly also to be reckoned among sailors' churches.

This is not the place to describe in detail all features of interest in this South Aisle. There are the brasses, in which no other City church is so rich: seven out of the fourteen notable ones are to be found in this part of the church. There is the elaborately carved font-cover, partly from the master-hand of Grinling Gibbons; and the canopied stone chantry tomb, about which nothing much is known. Not least there is the entrance, with its modern flight of steps surrounded by arms of All Hallows' worthies and pictures of St. Francis, which leads down to that quiet and lovely place of private prayer, the 14th century crypt discovered and restored in 1926.

One generation after another of God's people comes to the old church on Tower Hill, bearing gifts in their hands and hearts, and passes on. Let us hope that our own generation will live to see the Mariners' Chapel completed to the glory of God and for the service of the men who go down to the sea in ships.

CHURCH BELLS

A SONNET.

*Flinging their brazen challenge on the air,
The iron-tongued ministers of heavenly grace
Sound, from a thousand steeples o'er the face
Of England's lovely land, their call to prayer.
The mellow village, nestling in the shire,
Clusters, dependent, round the old grey tower,
And hears the summons at this solemn hour
Rung o'er the fields for labourer and squire.
Old customs change and changing, fade away,
Faiths, once a-flame, grow dim with passing years,
Reason calls halt, but shall we see the day,
When weary oft with tolling to deaf ears,
Silence shall reign within those towers grey,
And no sound mar the stillness—save our tears?*

R. SHORTO,
St. Albans.

THE ELDER BRETHREN.

"A Voice in Ramah"

SO comes the end! I hope Toc H will never forget utterly the way in which God brought the first friends in. Those early helpers who are yet alive would not permit me to put down instances in which they played their quiet part. All that I can therefore do, from time to time, when some old friend goes Home, is to jot down my memories.

Last night I was rung up from—shall we say?—Suffolk, and learnt that I was speaking to the sister of Mrs. Anon —, one of these. The death had just occurred in a Nursing Home where she had been for some months. I cannot quite remember how she first came in touch with Toc H, but I always thought that we owed her to Siddie Hoare; he knew so many of the class to whom her type belonged. Before the war she must have been as remarkable as she was fortunate. Happily married, and with large resources, a witty mind, a husband and two sons, all Regulars. The home from which they went out in '14 cannot have been an easy one to leave behind. Both boys were killed, and then the husband died; and by the time peace came, her family on both sides had lost twelve men, not merely remote kindred but in the closest consanguinity. This was the origin of "Our Twelve" Room, which she set up in Mark III House in London. Some men now scattered to the far corners of the Empire remember this Room well, for they lived in it; and some of them went further and began to be received into the friendship of the still young, grey-haired lady who came to do the flowers every week. Then other needs arose and she responded, always preserving anonymity. Further gifts came unasked with increasing frequency. They were not idly sent. They came to subsidize developments on various lines perceived by a keen mind which never ceased to criticize Toc H. No one was more exacting in the minutiae of its performance. She never allied herself with those of whom the Psalmist spoke as having been "eaten up by the zeal of thine House." Her contribution was incisive, questioning, a searching after aims to be pursued, and means to reach those aims. She did not contemplate Toc H as a good Churchwoman. Rather she loved the wider atmosphere which had its proper place within its walls. Here are two definitions of Toc H, which occur in her letters:

- (1) TOC H is a world-wide brotherhood perpetuating in peace the comradeship learnt in war. Besides hostels of hospitable intent opening up in the principal cities, its voluntary man-power offers reinforcement to all kinds of existing work for ameliorating the conditions or promoting the unity of mankind.
- (2) TOC H was founded as a voluntary blood-brotherhood of peace sanctified by that outpoured in the war. Its aim is an unclassified fellowship, and the promotion of work already in being for making a more practical reality on earth of the Kingdom of God.

From time to time, though never very frequently, she stole into Toc H and saw a fragment of it with her own eyes and in its native pewter. She stayed apart from the big demonstrations, but not from the big movements of the Spirit. Her health declined, and during the decline I was allowed to see her now and then. I found her restless, overstrained, unable to escape the slow agony which comes through years of bitter isolation. Yet in a moment all these things would pass, and she would be her natural self again. Nearly a year has elapsed since I last saw her. Her hold on life had given way completely. She tried to die, was put under restraint; and there, like some caged bird, her spirit broke. They say that free birds, when confined in cages, suffer a torturing sense communicated from their impotent wings to their faint minds, inexorably stifled. Birds are but symbols of the human soul, conscious of heights which cannot now be achieved. Where liberty is lost thus finally, only the gate of Death can give it back; and where the mind has been

most brilliant, it burns out its own filaments. Then darkness must go on and on within it, until death's shadows fall, encompassing the spent lamp with true tenderness, and surely bringing it again to light.

After all, she was not young, she was not old; she was not pious, and she was not pagan. For her Toc H had elements of promise which, could they be achieved, would serve the cause towards the cost whereof her broken heart had paid its earthly due.

TUBBY.

R. H. Alcock : Durban Branch.

"TOMMY" ALCOCK, who passed over on March 16, was formerly Jobmaster of the Branch. Besides being a founder member of Durban he was instrumental in founding the Berea and Overport Groups. The Durban Men's Rest Club owed its existence in no small measure to his ruling passion for serving his fellow-men. He gave continual active service to the Prisoner's Aid, Child Welfare, Anti-waste, the Blind, the Young People's Activity League and other organisations. He was one of the inaugurators of the Boy Scout movement in Durban and among the first Durban Scoutmasters. He was indeed a very remarkable character. He was a poor speaker, with a hesitating manner, and when "high-hearted happiness" was somewhat crudely expressed—as may sometimes happen in early days in Toc H ventures—he was continually "ragged" whenever he got up to speak: at such times he was quite unmoved and stood it with amazing patience. Greatly loved and consistently admired, "Tommy" goes to join the Elder Brethren, leaving an example which all may strive to follow.

George Brown : Mark XIX, Leeds.

The tragic death of GEORGE, at the age of 22, on March 27, fatally injured while returning to Leeds on his motor-cycle after visiting his parents in Newcastle, has left a gap that will not easily be filled. He was a quiet and unassuming worker, and his cheery countenance will be greatly missed by both Mark and Branch.

Sir Claud Severn : Chairman, Thames Valley District.

The Thames Valley suffered a severe loss when Sir CLAUD SEVERN, the District Chairman, passed over to join the Elder Brethren on Saturday, April 9, after a short illness. Sir Claud, who was born in 1869 and educated at St. Peter's College, Adelaide, and Selwyn College, Cambridge, was formerly Colonial Secretary at Hong Kong—a K.B.E., C.B.E., and LL.D. of Hong Kong University. He retired from the Colonial Service in 1926 and the same year became a member of Toc H. He first made his appearance in the Family as a visitor to Mark II, where he entertained them greatly by his songs at the piano. His very real musical gifts were ever at the service of Toc H and enlivened many a meeting in his own District and elsewhere. His interests were many and various, though particularly in the field of education. Extremely well read, a lively conversationalist, a charming host and full of sympathetic understanding, he will be greatly missed by a large circle of friends. He married late in life and leaves a widow and a young family, while his house was always a home to many young people whose parents were serving their country abroad. The heartfelt sympathy of Toc H is extended to all those who grieve his loss.

F. Batts : Treasurer, Banbury Group

By the death of "Pop," Banbury have lost one of their original members. He was a very keen worker and his office will be difficult to fill.

THE OPEN HUSTINGS

Limitation of Branch Status.

The Central Council's decision about this matter is reported on p. 218, and the following letter from the mover of the Resolution which was passed deals with one question he did not answer at the time. As the Council took its opportunity to discuss the whole subject, further correspondence on it in these columns will now cease.—ED.

DEAR EDITOR,

Lack of time prevented my replying to a point made by Greene of Norwich, but I feel that some explanation is called for.

Greene complained that, as the Central Executive had arranged for one of their number to move the resolution welcoming limitation of Branch status, they should have ensured that the case against was put with equal weight by another of their number. The suggestion was that, by this omission, the Executive had in fact, if not in intention, loaded the dice in favour of their resolution. A statement of the facts will, I trust, remove this impression. When the Executive considered the matter in December last they were unanimous in favour of limitation and felt that the proposal would be so universally welcomed by leaders in Toc H everywhere that it would be superfluous to ask the Council to spend time upon it.

The March JOURNAL, containing Haggen's letter, showed that their anticipation was not fully justified and it was expected that a resolution condemning the Executive's decision would be put on the Council Agenda by Haggen or another.

When the Executive met in April no such notice of motion had been received.

If, however, there were differences of opinion on the subject among Toc H leaders, the Executive had no wish to stifle discussion. They therefore framed a resolution which they asked me to move.

They could not put up one of their number to oppose as all were strongly in favour

of limitation. They were, however, satisfied that if the resolution were moved it would give Haggen and others an opportunity of stating the grounds of their opposition more fully, and perhaps with more practical results, than was possible through the JOURNAL.

In the result, that is exactly what happened. Haggen, speaking after Greene had made his complaint, stated his case fully, with deep sincerity and a restraint as telling as it was marked.

I am sure all present will feel that no member of the Central Executive could have stated the case against the resolution more cleverly or more effectively.

The Council owe it entirely to the Central Executive that they had the opportunity of hearing Haggen's excellent speech or of discussing the matter at all.

After some of the delightful sallies of the afternoon, I am wondering whether membership of the Executive adds to the weight of one's words or otherwise!

Yours sincerely,

H. TODD THORNBERRY.
Central Executive.

* * * * *

Training for Leadership

DEAR EDITOR,

In last November's JOURNAL your London correspondent tells us that the problem of training for leadership is growing more and more acute, and that we must get busy and try to find a means of providing a steady supply of future leadership not only for Toc H itself, but for the world of service outside.

May I put in a plea for the limitation of the period of office? Training week-ends have their usefulness, but there is no training like taking on the job of Secretary, Treasurer, Jobmaster or Pilot in a Toc H family, and the more members who have the opportunity the better. These are jobs which do definitely fit men to become leaders inside or

outside the movement and one or other of these jobs is one of which a good proportion of the membership is capable. The sympathy and backing up which are part of the fellowship in Toc H, and help and guidance obtained from his predecessor, rapidly bring the new officer to a state of efficiency, so that the change is by no means harmful to the unit. In fact, a unit which includes some ex-officers is immensely stronger than one which does not.

This is not theory; it is the result of observation and experience. Many of our Area Secretaries and District Officers are men who have held office in a unit, but have not allowed themselves, or have not been allowed, to develop a vested interest in the job. Also, many of our best Group and Branch members, who have had fresh avenues of service opened up to them by the development through Toc H of their capabilities and vision, and whose attendance at meetings has in some cases become irregular in consequence, owe much of their development to a period of service as a Group or Branch Officer.

I would suggest that this limitation of the period of office, with a view to giving new members a chance to show what they can do and to be changed by the responsibilities and opportunities of office, should be adopted as the policy of all Groups and Branches as it

has been by at least one Group (now a Branch) with excellent results. A period of less than two years is hardly sufficient for a man to reap the full benefits from the job; but longer than two years is unnecessary. I do not advocate election for two years; there should still be an election at each A.G.M., but a man should not be eligible for re-election to the same office after two years' service.

The same principle applies to the offices of Warden, District Secretary, and so on, although the desirable period of service may be different.

I have not mentioned chairmen because I am a firm believer in the system of the rota as advocated in "Fest Firm, Hands Busy," which is all too rare in practice in this District. It helps so tremendously to bring out new members and is such a rich source of discovery of hidden talent, and all the objections to it are overcome if the secretary adapts the rota to the programme, by arranging for "proved" chairmen at Guest-nights and business nights and "experimental" chairmen for the evenings devoted to talks by members.

Does experience in other districts confirm these statements?

Yours sincerely,
BOB CANNING.

Perry Barr, Birmingham.

MULTUM IN PARVO

¶ JAMES BURFORD, formerly of Leicester and Bristol Branches, has now taken over the Area Secretaryship in South Wales. From May 8, A. S. GREENACRE (Western Area Secretary) will be at Mark IX, 29, St. Paul's Road, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

¶ A welcome to ERNEST GREASLEY, since 1921 of Leicester and Knutsford, who is now starting work at Nottingham as North Midlands Secretary.

¶ OVERSEAS MEMBERS will be welcomed at the Training Week-end and SOUTHERN AREA FESTIVAL to be held at OXFORD on July 1 & 2.

¶ The BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL will be held in London on December 9 and 10.

¶ Toc H visitors will be welcome at the Twenty-third NATIONAL PEACE CONFERENCE at Oxford from July 7 to 10, 1933. Details of subjects, speakers, cost, etc., from G. Bailey, Esq., M.A., 39, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

¶ On and after May 8 all enquiries and orders for *A Service of Light and Rededication in Toc H* (see December, 1932, JOURNAL, page 441) should be sent to A. S. Greenacre, Toc H Mark IX, 29, St. Paul's Road, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

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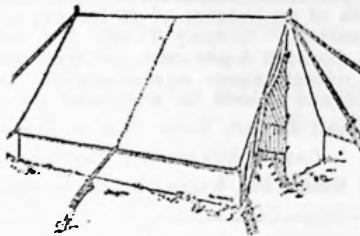
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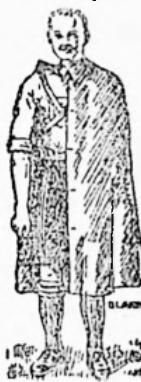
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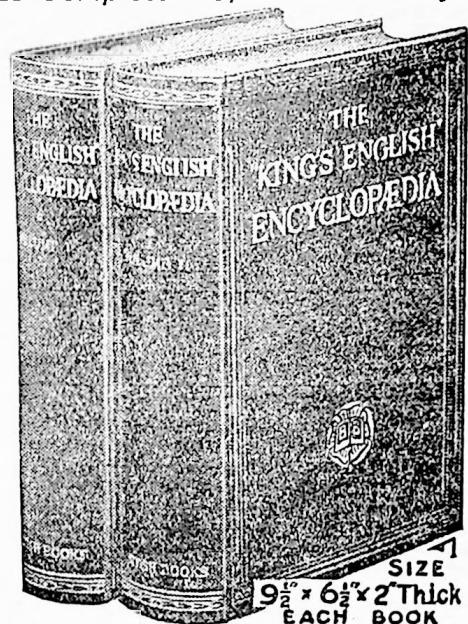
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TOC H LISTENING

UBBY, speaking at the Festival in Birmingham last December, said that, in addition to Toc H, one of the most potent factors in the world to-day was Wireless. Some suggestions as to how we might take more advantage of its opportunities follow.

One of the things that Toc H tries to do is to bring the expert to the Group. This is becoming more and more difficult as the number of Toc H units increases and the novelty of the experience for the expert wears off. Also, in a time of increasing leisure a great number of people are not equipped to make proper use of this leisure.

These two problems can possibly be met to some extent by taking advantage of the programmes which the British Broadcasting Corporation are providing. They spend their whole time procuring experts and they get them to deal with a lot of the problems that should interest members of Toc H. Take, for instance, the programme for January, February and March, 1933. It included a very comprehensive series on housing and the problems of slum clearance, and an equally comprehensive series on the efforts that are being made to cope with the enforced leisure of the unemployed. There was a series on "Careers" giving some idea of the conditions and requirements of some of the big occupational groups. There was, too, a series of discussions on some very controversial matters such as Betting, Public Schools, and Vivisection.

In the interesting April to June programme, for example, you will see that a weekly talk or discussion will be devoted to various aspects of industrial relations. A Sunday series will be devoted to such pioneers of world exploration as Marco Polo and Dr. Nansen, and such pioneers of a humamer world as Florence Nightingale and Lord Shaftesbury. There will be a series on slavery. On Monday evenings, the economist will be in the witness box and he will have to answer the sort of questions that the man in the street would like to ask him, and which, indeed, he can ask him, if he chooses to write to Commander Stephen King-Hall, c/o the B.B.C.

Then, on the lighter side of things there will be regular reviews of books, theatres and cinemas, and one series on the enjoyment of novels and another on the enjoyment of music. There are courses in three European languages and a series by Julian Huxley on "Science in the Making." On Friday evenings, J. B. Priestley will tell you whatever he feels inclined to about everyday matters. On Saturday evenings there will be two series, one devoted to descriptions of various enterprising holidays that people have tried; and the other to the playing of several of our great actors and actresses—they will be heard either personally or by record in some of the parts that have made them famous.

One of the difficulties of "listening" by a Toc H unit is that the times of these series may not be very convenient, though very few of them are before 7.30 and none of them after 10 p.m. Also, it probably would not be possible for a unit to listen consecutively to the whole of any series. But we think that it might be possible for one person to undertake to follow the coming programme and warn his unit of items that they ought not to miss.

One of the activities of the B.B.C. is to encourage Discussion Groups who will follow some of the educational series. We believe that there is difficulty in finding suitable leaders for these Discussion Groups. This, possibly, might interest one or two of your members to whom some of the other more obvious forms of social service do not appeal.

If your unit is interested in the programmes provided by the B.B.C. they would, we understand, be prepared to supply them with a certain amount of free literature—including the Talks Programmes. They would also be prepared to supply information about the Discussion Groups.

L. B. G. C.

NEWS FROM THE NAVY

The China Fleet

G. E. MORRIS ("Moggie"), Fleet Secretary, writes from H.M.S. *Hermes*, stationed at Hong Kong, on March 23, to the Hon. Commissioner for the Royal Navy at our Headquarters. He announces, first of all, that the *Hermes* is shortly leaving for home (he hopes to report himself at H.Q. in August) and that a new Secretary for the China Fleet was therefore elected in March: he is Leading Seaman George Cumberworth of H.M.S. *Medway*, who in 1929 was Secretary of the Group on H.M.S. *Ramillies*. He goes on to tell of the visit of 'Bobs' Ford and Harry Chappell to Hong Kong: "A number of meetings were held, culminating in a dinner. The result of these has been most happy. The shore-side is now definitely functioning as a 'Grope,' with a membership (civilian) of about a dozen. Meetings are held every fortnight as a definite rule, with a sort of unofficial meeting in the week between. Various jobs are being tackled, and we have had some talks on various social organisations. The Bishop of Hong Kong is our Padre, and everything bodes fair to the effort to start Toc H in Hong Kong. As regards the 'service' side, we are increasing membership, and keenness too. We are not so well placed as other stations for regular meetings, as the Fleet is never together for more than a few weeks at Wei-Hai-Wei, where gunnery programmes prevent all being present at meetings." He speaks of the job which Toc H can do in bringing men together: "There are frequent letters in the daily press moaning about the treatment of civilians by service-men and vice-versa. Another problem which will eventually have to be tackled is that of the inclusion, or otherwise, of the Eurasian and Chinese elements in the Group." He thanks the Overseas Office for sending him the names of men going out to the China Station. "Two have arrived, they have both attached themselves to the 'Grope' and are going strongly. There is no doubt at all that such advice from the Overseas Office is a good show in every way. Newcomers are met with a Fleet Letter, and feel that they are not strangers in a strange land."

The East Indies Squadron

H.Q. has received, through Toc H Ceylon, a detailed report from P. H. Harris, Secretary of the Toc H 'Circle' on board H.M.S. *Enterprise*, of their doings during a cruise from November, 1932, to March, 1933. Arriving in Bombay, our Naval members renewed their acquaintance with Padre Stanley Clapham (late of All Hallows Staff, now of Missions to Seamen, Bombay) who found them a job to do right away—as waiters and barmen at the ex-Servicemen's Ball on Armistice night. During the next weeks the *Enterprise* members turned up in force several times at meetings of the Bombay Group, and had two of their members initiated there. On December 7 their ship reached Karachi and a few days later sat down to supper with the Karachi Group before taking part in the World Chain of Light. The Group gave them a fine social evening—lasting into the early hours of next morning—before they sailed for Colombo. During their three days there they were, of course, in touch with old friends in Toc H, and paid a flying visit to the wonderful school for blind children at Mt. Lavinia: the *Enterprise* Secretary had his gift for the school in the shape of another book he had just transcribed into Braille. Then they sailed on to Calcutta, where John Wright, the Naval Correspondent, came on board to greet them. There was a big Guest-night, with a fine discussion on "Whither are we drifting?" at the Calcutta Mark. Jobs were not forgotten during their short stay—the Navy men visited the Hospital and took people over their ship. Reaching Madras on February 7, they attended a Guest-night of the Branch and two social evenings. Time alone prevented them tackling jobs as they would have liked.

This is, in brief, a happy record of fellowship and service. But the most interesting item in Percy Harris' report concerns the Trincomalee 'Grope' which was formed by members from H.M.S. *Enterprise* and H.M.S. *Hawkins*, meeting at the Sailors' Home on February 24. (Reference to this is also made in the India news, p. 232). The purpose of the meeting was "to discuss the formation of a 'Grope,' thereby planting a permanent place for Toc H, where the Naval contingent may assist on shore whilst here, as it is our base and it is felt that we must have some co-operation." They agreed on a simple form of organisation for this unusual unit. "On each ship all Toc H fellows shall be known as 'Circle,' with the name of the ship preceding; each 'Circle' to have its own officers, viz., Secretary and Treasurer, Jobmaster, Pilot and, if possible, Padre; when the ships are together, they all amalgamate on shore." For the proper working of the 'Grope' they appointed these officers *pro tem.* "until the resident fellows are able to take over." The membership began as 25. Three meetings had been held up to the date of the report (March 12), and a fine variety of jobs tackled, ranging from painting the Methodist Church and repairing the organ in the Anglican Church, starting a library in the Sailors' Home and running weekly whist-drives there "for everyone," tidying up the Cemetery, organising a concert for the Methodist Church and doing electrical work there at the Orphanage. This is not the first time that sea-going members of Toc H have taken a leading part in building it on shore (see also Home Fleet news). It certainly proves that the *Enterprise* 'Circle' is worthy of its name.

The Home Fleet

The third report from the Home Fleet Correspondent has reached the JOURNAL (previous reports appeared in October, 1932, and February, 1933). This was written under adverse conditions on board H.M.S. *Hood*, rolling heavily at the time. "A great advance on this cruise was the formation of Study Circles on various ships, which have proved to be of great value to the probationers." At the first meeting of the cruise the Chaplain read them "Follow me home" from *Plain Tales of Flanders*, with a gramophone record of the song to illustrate the story; then they discussed the significance of "Abandon rank, all ye that enter here." To the second meeting members came prepared to express their own views on "Why does Toc H exist?" and were able to summarise a good discussion as follows: "Toc H exists as a living memorial to those who made the Supreme Sacrifice in the War; to conquer general hate and to break down the barriers of class distinction; for the benefit of those less fortunate than ourselves; and to show an example to others by the way we conduct our daily lives." At the third meeting they discussed the meaning of "Light" and the Elder Brethren; at the fourth, three Points of the Compass—"To love widely, To think fairly, To witness humbly."

Few shore contacts could be made on this cruise as there were no Toc H units at most of the places visited. At Malta, however, members from H.M.S. *Courageous* and *Furious* were present at the dedication of the Branch Lamp. At Gibraltar they concentrated their energies on a 'Grope,' "expecting great things." Twenty-three members and four visitors met at the Y.M.C.A. there on March 2, in a room lent by the Shore Correspondent. The ceremony of "Light" was explained by a member from H.M.S. *Lucia* and taken by a member from H.M.S. *Rodney*, using a home-made Rushlight, the handiwork of a shipwright on his ship. A member from H.M.S. *Versatile* spoke on "What is Toc H?" and home-going prayers were taken by the Padre of H.M.S. *Hood*. A second meeting at Gibraltar was held on March 18. This time they used the Rushlight of H.M.S. *Courageous*, which is being sent to Belfast Branch to keep, as a precious relic of Toc H in the Navy which no longer forms regular Groups in the shore sense. They listened to the story of

Capt. Scott of the Antarctic before "Light" and remembered him and his fellow-heroes in the Silence. They then asked their Gibraltar visitors what they felt about the chances of starting Toc H there. The response encouraged our Navy members to feel that they had been sowing seed to good purpose. The Dean offered a room and his enthusiastic help; a member living in Gibraltar offered to act as Secretary and told them of some jobs waiting to be done; "a soldier friend, not given to many words, was willing to take his coat off and get on with it." Good luck to Gibraltar!—so say we all.

THE FAMILY OVERSEAS

Australia

SUCH is the growth of Toc H in South Australia that it has become necessary to divide into areas. At the present moment there are three of these Areas: North-Western, South-Western, and Eastern, and in each there are approximately seven units. A committee, meeting once a month, guides the destinies of each area. Although this scheme has been working only two months, a team spirit and an Area consciousness is developing already, and no doubt a heightening of the standards of units and of membership will result.

When, nearly two years ago, Lord Somers' term of office as Governor of Victoria came to an end, he took with him on his departure the best wishes of the whole community, for the King's representative had shown a deep interest in all sorts and conditions of men. Perhaps nothing that he did has been regarded with greater interest than the establishment of a camp at Somers, on the shore of Westernport Bay. There, every January for a week, are gathered together a hundred boys, half of them from the public schools and the other half engaged in commerce and industry. Care is taken that the different types mix together by means of all kinds of unobtrusive methods. Lord Somers fulfilled his promise to revisit the camp in February this year when at a packed meeting he said that on his return to England he realised what a small community Australia was when compared with the Mother Country. Consequently, the individual is more conspicuous in Australian life than in English. In Toc H humble witness is apt to be placed in the background; there is a tendency to regard oneself, one's unit, or one's State as of very great importance. By looking at the world-wide aspect of Toc H, a more reasonable sense of proportion may be obtained, but the necessity for hard work not minimised.

It is well known that there is an excellent organisation for fostering the growth of the units in Australia. One item in this category, the Consolidating Team for Western Australia, has arranged a series of Conferences, two for Jobmasters, two for Pilots, one for Programme Committees, one for Secretaries, and one for all members and probationers. The intention is to hold one each month at a different unit. Each Conference will be held at the unit weakest in the point which is being discussed; such as a Jobmasters' Conference where the unit is weak in service, and so on. In addition, this system of holding Conferences at various meeting places will encourage inter-unit visiting, thus giving inspiration and encouragement to the unit that is the host of the evening. Already implosions of the unexpected and overwhelming kind have given fresh leases of life to two units in the State. In consequence the emphasis is to be laid on organised implosions this year.

Just too late for inclusion in this news comes the agenda for the Eighth Federal Conference and Council to be held at the time of the Federal Birthday Festival at Launceston, Tasmania, on March 14-21. The business before it is likely to make the Conference one of the most important in the history of Toc H Australia and shall be reported in our next issue.

New Zealand

Regularly since 1927 the Schools section of Toc H New Zealand has run its camp for a mixed party of boys from secondary schools and orphanages. This takes place over the New Year—for, of course, New Zealand summer is our winter. The gulls, the wind, the waves in Resolution Bay, the meals and walks and talks, the camp-fire, these are the externals—the true thing, the bond between boy and boy was growing all the time. The New Year was ushered in with the usual bonfire, and then a torchlight procession wound its way to the Chapel for a brief moment for prayer and praise.

Canada

THAT Bob Sawers has gone over the Border, left his Scotland behind him and has set out to pool his experience with Toc H in Eastern Canada is common knowledge. He has gone at an appropriate time. Toc H in Canada is ripe for advance; Canadian life itself has the stir of Spring in it. Men are turning to seek new values, greater depths. If Toc H can seize this mood of desire and unrest, provide a way of realising it in practice and re-introduce fundamentals into everyday life, the movement will justify its existence. Bob and Padre Holmes are first concentrating on getting the framework of the movement firm, so that true inspiration may bring natural growth. Officers and leaders are being collected together for training week-ends. To see the vision clearly and steadily, whether it is guiding a committee or running a boys' club, is the first essential for an efficient job. Sincerity of purpose is not all sufficient, knowledge is also necessary. The *Midnight Sun* says: "One of the healthiest signs was a manifest dissatisfaction among our members with Toc H as they knew it. These men felt that Toc H ideally should have a message peculiarly helpful at the present time, but they found some units terribly disappointing, and almost ready to throw up the sponge. When the week-ends were over it was a joy to see new enthusiasm break forth in these chaps."

Bob has survived his nickname, "the Cockney Scot," and has turned criticism into enthusiasm. The first training week-end at St. Lambert set a killing pace; Bob himself slept for eighteen hours after it, but by letters and conversations it is obvious that his fearless challenge to members for a consecration of life in the service of the Kingdom through Toc H has started things moving and growing, in more than one unit. Everywhere is evidence of a sincere desire to make Toc H not only more efficient but also more effective for its task of changing chaps. Ottawa, as the result of one of these sudden raids, has applied to become a provisional District, and to be allowed to undertake the spreading of Toc H among new teams of men.

India and Ceylon

'GROPS,' as we know, grow into Groups, but what the growth is named before it is fledged as a 'Wing' of Toc H no man knows. An indefinable thing of this undeveloped sort has been in existence since May last year, reaching its maturity in January, 1933, as the *Kohat Wing*. It asked for work and the work appeared. Scouts and their efficiency badges, the Hospital library, the Missionaries' Magic Lantern, the children's Nativity Play, these are the proteins, the calories and carbohydrates on which the Wing has fed and flourished. Padre Bagallay, the Padre-in-India, as the bearer of the Rushlight, visited the Wing in January, thus encouraging in their adventure eight members and ten of the Outer

Guard. As a nest of its own has been found by the Wing, nothing remains but that by its endeavours it shall become a Group, and then, with relief, we may change our metaphor. *Lahore* Group is deepening its roots into good earth. There have been comings and goings, the Padre-in-India has paid a double visit, the probation list shrinking by four has increased the Group strength by the same amount, expansion into Cantonments is planned, and the Annual Rededication Service and Quiet Day have run their courses. Sixteen men spent the Quiet Day together. The text for their three sessions was, "With twain he covered his face; with twain he covered his feet; with twain he did fly." And the lessons drawn from them for Toc H were Self-effacement, Humility, and Service.

The barest outline of the Birthday of the *Kandy* Group is known to us. The hospitality of Trinity College, supper and singing in the open under the stars, and Corporate Communions in the morning in the Chapel of the Light of the World will long be remembered by those who took part. *Colombo* Branch was there, for it is a unit that makes journeys with a good purpose. For witness, regard the proceeding of the *Colombo* Lamp and members to Trincomalee, where one enthusiastic Methodist Padre, with the collaboration of the Toc H members aboard *H.M.S. Hawkins* and *Enterprise* on their frequent visits to the port, has begun to build that which may be recognised as a Group as soon as a shore-staying nucleus equal in strength to the Fleet members is collected.

AREA DESPATCHES OF THE MONTH

From the North-Western Area

THE optimist and the pessimist both have their real value and use, as well as their full quota of adherents; each seems able to recognise a worthy "opposite number" in the other and unite in condemnation of the compromiser, *Mr. Facing-both-Ways*. And yet, there is much to be said for him (I should know for my friends so call me) provided that his views do not result in entire inaction, or fruitless indecision. So I shall content myself with seeking tendencies, rather than out-pouring paens of praise or pessimistic possibilities.

First, then, a tendency towards a sturdier self-dependence: District Teams taking a greater share of their responsibilities: new units growing up under the main care of the district officers rather than the staff: new types of service, new outlets for energy being discovered and responsibilities recognised more fully towards the family overseas. And with this newly-gained sense of responsibility there goes a better use of the full-time men in the Area. District Teams realise that no lasting value is gained by a continual round of "talking visits" to all units in their charge, but that much good may accrue from an evening spent in consultation with a Branch Executive or from a Saturday afternoon meeting with officers from each unit. Monthly meetings for Manchester and Salford Jobmasters have, we believe, done more than any number of "unit talks."

Also, in the District Teams themselves there appears this same desire to learn: most teams now quite definitely set aside some portion of the time, after the monthly business has been dealt with, when fundamental principles and points can be thrashed out. Weekends for training have not been numerous, mainly owing to expense, but much has been accomplished by this method of gathering together for a Saturday afternoon or evening. Rex's visit, when he met many of the District Officers from the Area in Gladstone House, was a source of inspiration and great help: and leaders everywhere are feeling after a better, deeper fellowship on which to build their most important service.

Not a few District Teams have since followed one of Rex's many practical hints, in arranging a Saturday afternoon "walk" for the Team, when each man has more chance of knowing his fellow members.

This same sense of "exploration" of new schemes and plans is perhaps best seen by the many varied efforts made throughout the Area to help in the Unemployment problem. In city, town and village, all manner of helpful ideas have been put into practice—Toc H sometimes taking the lead, sometimes combining with the already active local authorities. Not a few social centres for unemployed have been assisted by members: and in several places the centres have been visited by teams of Toc H men and an interchange of visits arranged. Besides and beyond this most important "ambulance" work there has, however, been a real desire in many units to go deeper to study the conditions that have resulted in such an economic situation, and to try to discover the right policies for the future. Study Groups have been started, and many of us are learning, for the first time, the rudiments of economics.

Here and there, we see another hopeful "tendency" towards literature: Journals better read, many Units making a regular feature of the "monthly Journal discussion night"; members and probationers buying and reading far more avidly than we ever remember before, the many books and pamphlets that are now obtainable. Tendencies are, however, like life, good and bad. Is there a tendency to "grow up and to grow older?" Sometimes I fancy I can see a Branch becoming "middle-aged" (surely the only way age counts is by its outlook): and yet the remedy is simple: splitting up, "hiving off" or whatever one may call an "extension plan" always involves that degree of upheaval and adventure necessary for the throwing up of young leadership and new lines of contact.

So far, you will have seen, I have tried to depart from the (as I think) often stereotyped reports of Area news; but to be true to my character, Facing-both-Ways, I must now give some report of District doings—it shall be very brief: *East Lancs.* District has so developed that it has had once again to be 'split'—*Pendle* and *East Lancs.* now being two provisional Districts. We have "acquired" *North Staffs*, there making new friendships in the southern part of the Area; at the same time we have just handed over the recently developed *North Derbyshire* section to the Derby Area folk; in doing so we know we shall not sever our many happy relationships with Buxton and Chapel, Bakewell and Longston. In the North there has just been held a Regional Rally at Sedbergh—most excellently conceived, planned and carried out—it is worth noting, too, the great 'country' growth of units in Westmorland. Our four 'houses' continue to do their many-sided work—having varied teams of men; making many threads of contact with their city's life, and acting as the centre of activity for Toc H in their Districts.

M. E. C.

From the West Midlands Area

SOME considerable time has elapsed since we in the West Midlands Area were privileged to give an account of our doings in the JOURNAL. We were, however, given quite a lot of publicity recently as we figured prominently in connection with the Lamp-Lighting Festival held in Birmingham, the metropolis of the Area, last December, a very full account of which appeared in a subsequent issue of the JOURNAL. Since then, the most important item of news concerning us is the splitting of our Area. For a long time, most of us had felt that the Area was geographically too large to be administered efficiently from Birmingham, and that greater efficiency would result if certain parts of it were transferred to adjacent areas, and a new Area was set up to include the North Wales Division, and the agricultural counties of Salop, Worcester, and Hereford lying to the West of the Area, in which Toc H units are as yet not very concentrated.

As we all had to pull together as one man to make the Festival a success, we had to postpone any domestic re-arrangements until this was a thing of the past, but the Festival over, steps were taken to bring about the necessary changes, most of which came into effect as from March 31. The new Area is already functioning, and the development within it is being supervised by two Divisional Committees, which are directly under the Central Executive. The present arrangements are in the form of an experiment, but if considerable expansion is the result, and financial difficulties can be overcome, it is hoped eventually to have a new united Area under one Area Executive and with Headquarters at Shrewsbury.

The two *Derbyshire* Districts on our Eastern flank have also left us, and for the time being form part of the East Midlands Area. Eventually we hope they will join forces with other Districts to form another new Area. There is yet one change to come about, and that is the exit of the *North Staffordshire* District from the Area; on May 1 it will join forces with the North-Western Area. When this last change has been effected, we shall have seven Districts left, and the Area will be more compact and workable. All the changes should lead to considerable further expansion both in our Area and in the new Area, especially as the Festival has created much enthusiasm and brought us many more friends.

After a somewhat tough struggle, we have succeeded in penetrating into the fastnesses of North Wales, but the two new inland Groups which were recently recognised are of a quality that made waiting worth while. Perhaps the best results which we have achieved are evident when you look at the Toc H map of Warwickshire, which is now closely dotted, a large number of new units having come into being during the last year, many of them in very small country villages. Really the movement in this county has been infectious and the idea that Toc H cannot function in rural districts has been dispelled. The *Wolverhampton* District became so strong in new units that a hive-off was necessary, and a new District called after Cannock Chase was recently established.

Birmingham itself now rejoices in twenty units, three of which became Branches last year, and received their Lamps at the December Festival. Hiving-off has taken place where older units have got too unwieldy, and several new "Gropes" have come into being in the suburbs.

In spite of the metamorphosis which has been taking place, the Service side of the movement has not been neglected in the Area. A corporate job of considerable dimensions was undertaken in Birmingham at Christmas, which involved the collection of ten thousand old toys. These were repaired by members and probationers and distributed to about seven hundred poor families, and to kiddies in seventeen hospitals. District Committees and units are doing everything possible to help forward all schemes for the welfare of the unemployed. In several towns in the Area Toc H has been the means of getting together representatives of the various local societies and public bodies which has resulted in the formation of Unemployed Welfare Committees, many of which have provided occupational and recreational centres.

Training Week-ends are held regularly in each District in the Area, and these are being run more and more by the District Officers themselves, without much help from the full-time staff. This proves the value of efficient District teams. We are still living in the hope that sooner or later a new Mark will be forthcoming for Birmingham, but meanwhile the old House is carrying on, and the number of Hostellers has increased. Schools work has been given the important place that it deserves in our Area programme, and recently a most successful conference was held in Birmingham for Schools Correspondents and Representatives.